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AUTHOR	Kadel, Stephanie; Watkins, Jim; Follman, Joseph; Hammond, Cathy
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ABSTRACT

This book is designed to assist teachers, school principals, district administrators, resource officers, students, and parents in creating safe environments where learning is the primary focus. The content is a blend of usable research and successful practice in which exemplary efforts and programs at local, state, and national levels are highlighted. Methods for identifying and assessing school safety needs and developing positive responses to those needs are also provided, as are "dynamite ideas" that highlight successful practices in schools. The text is divided into 5 chapters. Chapter 1 looks at ways to establish a safe environment and examines the effects of school violence, explores strategies for building resiliency, and outlines strategies for assessment and program planning. The second chapter details prevention strategies, such as essential prevention components, whereas chapter 3 establishes crisis-management and intervention strategies and includes information on creating a crisis-management plan and reporting violent incidents. Chapter 4 examines the roots of violence, such as community risk factors, and chapter 5 explores national, state, and local school safety initiative issues. Five appendices feature information on definitions for school incident types, a school-incident report form, and a sample parent and student discipline contract. (Contains approximately 190 references.) (RJM)

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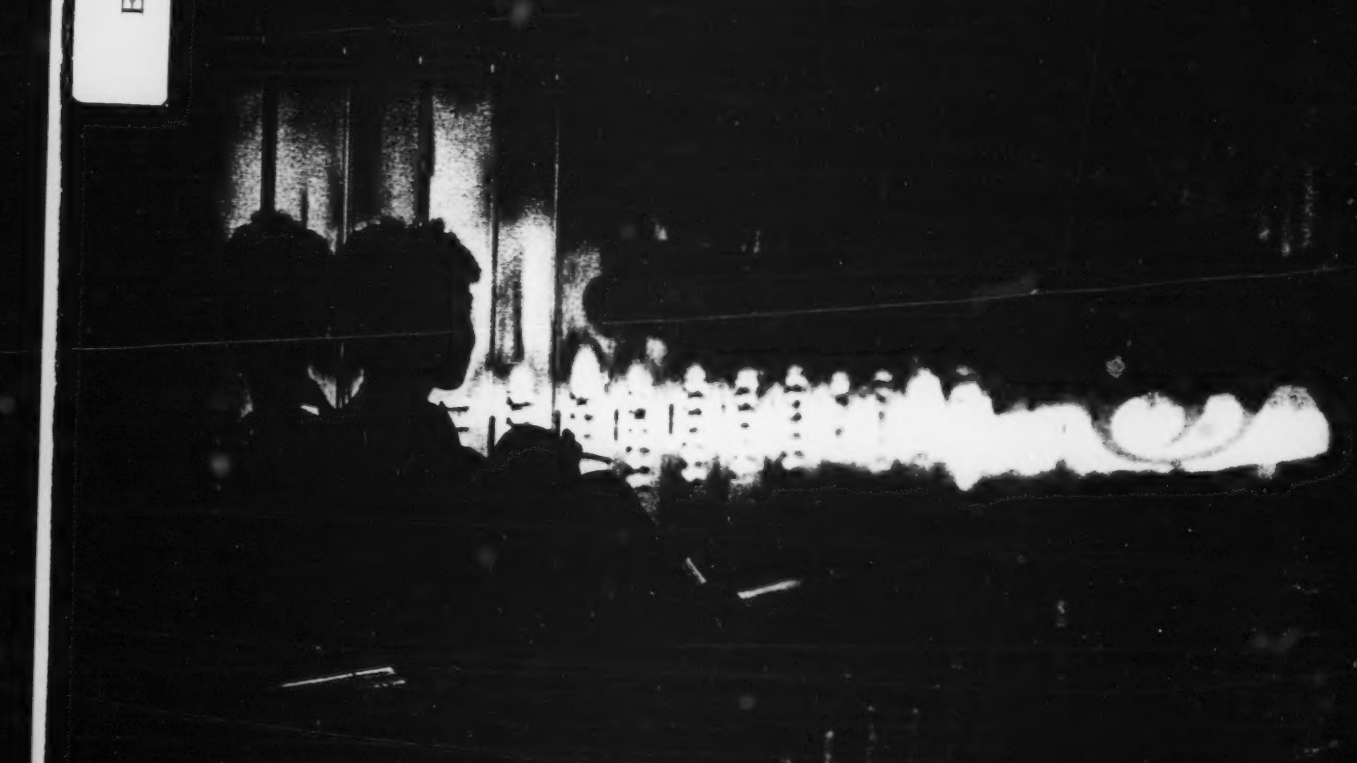

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Improving Learning through Research & Development

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Reducing School VIOLENCE

Building a Framework for School Safety

Reducing School Violence: Building a Framework for School Safety

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Southeast Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities

Written for SERVE by
Stephanie Kadel
Jim Watkins
Joseph Follman
Cathy Hammond

With additional submissions from
Nancy Cunningham, Nora Brashear, and Jane Detweiller

Edited by
Charles Ahearn, Director of Publishing and Quality Assurance, SERVE
Donna Nalley, Senior Editor, SERVE
Kelly Dryden, Senior Design Specialist, SERVE

Designed by
Marissa Coffenberry, Design Specialist, SERVE
Kelly Dryden, Senior Design Specialist, SERVE

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Reviewers

Elizabeth Ackerman, Fulton County Board of Education, Atlanta, Georgia

Alison Adler, Palm Beach County Public Schools, West Palm Beach, Florida

Michael Carpenter, Georgia Department of Human Resources

Joe Clark, Department of Corrections, Tallahassee, Florida

Jerry Corley, South Carolina Department of Education

Elaine Crawford, Fulton County Board of Education, Atlanta, Georgia

Barbara Foster, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida

John F. Gaines, Florida Association of District School Superintendents

Emma Guilarte, South Carolina Department of Education

Asa Hilliard, Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia

Peggy Kelly, Northeast Florida Educational Consortium, Palatka, Florida

Wayne Kirby, Aiken Public Schools, South Carolina

Thomas Luke, Jackson Public Schools, Mississippi

Sandy Marston, Tenino School District, Washington

Howard Mason, Southeast Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities

Red McCallister, Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida

Doris McQuiddy, Alabama State Department of Education

Jeff Miller, Braddock Senior High School, Miami, Florida

Bill Modzeleski, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

Cynthia Moses, Parklane Elementary School, Atlanta, Georgia

Andy Mullins, Mississippi State Department of Education

Ouida Myers, Alabama State Department of Education

Bob Nations, SERVE Inc., Greensboro, North Carolina

Karen O'Donnell, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

Raymond Perkins, Greenwood School District 50, South Carolina

Deloris Pringle, SERVE, Atlanta, Georgia

Lani Ray, Parklane Elementary School, Atlanta, Georgia

Mike Rozovich, Aiken County Sheriff's Office, South Carolina

Ron Sachs, Governor's Office, Tallahassee, Florida

Joe Sellers, Police Officer, Moss Point Schools, Mississippi

Vee Stalker, University of Alabama-Birmingham

Ralph Vedros, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington

Marie Washburn, Seaborn Lee Elementary School, Atlanta, Georgia

Paulette White, Mississippi State Department of Education

Dianne Wilkes, Tallahassee, Florida

Introduction

No school–whether elementary, middle, or high; small or large; poor or rich; urban, rural, or suburban–is or can be completely safe. Violence pervades schools across the nation, but knowing that violence in schools is merely a reflection of societal problems is of little comfort to educators. Acts of violence disrupt the normal functioning of a school, and fear of violence prevents students and teachers from concentrating on meaningful learning and teaching. Resources that should be allocated for instructional materials, staff development, and other educational necessities are spent on security.

In 1993, *Reducing School Violence* was published by SERVE to provide educators and others with strategies and suggestions for addressing the problems of violence in schools. The book was designed partly as a wake-up call for those who had not yet faced the issue of school safety comprehensively. It began with intervention strategies and did not address prevention or the roots of violence until later chapters.

In the past few years, new research and practice have further illuminated and broadened the issue of school safety. Studies of risk and resiliency and the interrelation between destructive behavior and students' exposure to risks in various domains–school, home, community, etc.–have brought about the restructuring of this document. There is greater recognition of both the many factors that threaten school safety (e.g., fighting, disruptive behavior, weapons, harassment, vandalism, theft, battery) and contribute to problems and the ways that school policies and structures (discipline procedures, intervention programs, prevention efforts, dress codes, student, conflict resolution curricula, etc.) can have a positive or negative impact on students and the school.

Just as there are students who combine actions and innate skills with supportive networks to overcome adversity, so too can schools combine strategies, alliances, and support systems to develop an integrated approach to safety and education. Schools, in other words, can be resilient to violence and other risks and promote resiliency in students.

Federal and state governments are taking a stronger stance in addressing school safety. A variety of resources is now available from various agencies, from federal grants to local partnerships. A section of this document has been added highlighting funding sources, interagency collaboration, and the benefits of cooperative planning at the local, state, and national level to establish supportive networks and resource options.

The key to school safety is a comprehensive approach. Safe schools integrate designs for school safety into school improvement, restructuring, and reform efforts. Schools, families, and communities must work together to assess students' and schools' needs, reduce factors that place students at risk of committing violence or becoming victims, and promote strategies that increase students' abilities to reduce or overcome the risks they face.

Reducing School Violence: Building a Framework for School Safety is designed to assist teachers, school principals, district administrators, resource officers, students, parents, and others in creating safe environments where learning is the primary focus. The content is a blend of usable research and successful practice. Exemplary efforts and programs at local, state, and national levels are highlighted. Methods for identifying and assessing school safety needs and developing positive responses to those needs are also provided.

Throughout the publication, "Dynamite Ideas" highlight successful practices in schools and exemplify suggestions made in the text. Many schools and districts have found effective ways to reduce violence and make their environments safer; *Reducing School Violence: Building a Framework for School Safety* describes a number of these programs and provides contact information to enable readers to find out more about them.

Chapter 1

Establishing a Safe Environment

Not only does a school's environment affect learning, but more than any other setting it influences how students conform to society. Schools' internal life influences how all students behave, often more powerfully than the home or community. It is unlikely that a student immersed in a school environment of delinquency will form a more responsible view of society at large.

—J. A. Rapp, F. Carrington, & G. Nicholson, *School Crime and Violence: Victims' Rights*, 1992

The Effects of School Violence

Educators witness daily the effects of violence in their schools, and students are profoundly affected by it. The most obvious effect is the physical harm that can result. When weapons, especially guns, are brought to school, everyday student conflicts such as arguments over girlfriends or boyfriends, disputes about possessions, and name-calling can become fatal interactions. If one student uses a gun to settle an altercation, others will feel they need guns, too. As Gaustad (1991) notes, a cycle of fear begins, prompting an arms race where youths seek ever more powerful forms of protection.

A 1993 national survey on violence in public schools found that 23 percent of students and 11 percent of teachers had been victims of violence in and around schools (*Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher*, 1993). Another national survey that same year reported that 12 percent of students responding had carried a weapon on school property in the month before the survey, and seven percent had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the previous 12 months (1993 *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance*).

Along with guns or violent attacks at schools, there are other types of behavior that may threaten students and contribute to feelings of fear at school. They include aggressive behaviors by students toward other students, such as threats, fights, bullying by older students, and harassment of any type, such as sexual or racial. These types of behaviors have the potential to be a constant disruptive force. For example, aggressive behaviors like fighting and harassment made up 32 percent of all reported school incidents in Florida in the 1993-94 school year, while violent and weapons offenses made up 10 percent of reported incidents.

The murder rate among 14- to 17-year-olds increased 165% from 1985-1995.

U.S. Justice Department, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: A National Report*, 1995

Vandalism and thefts are also common on campuses; a recent study found that part of what makes students feel afraid at school is the threat of having possessions

stolen. Vandalism and theft represent about 10 percent of reported incidents in Florida, for example, and approximately one-third of students responding to a national survey had had property stolen or damaged on school property (1993 *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance*).

Whether incidents involve theft, harassment, or violent behavior, they may produce fear in students. The *Youth Risk Behavior* survey also showed that four percent of students had missed at least one day of school in the month before the survey because they felt unsafe at school or traveling to or from school. Students avoid some hallways for fear of sexual and other harassment or assault, cause themselves discomfort and sometimes pain because they think bathrooms are unsafe or lack privacy, and do not report threats out of fear of retaliation.

> Nearly half the teachers surveyed reported that a lack of or inadequate alternative programs for disruptive students limited their ability to maintain discipline in their classrooms; over a third stated that disruptive behavior interfered with their teaching. These two issues had more of an effect on teaching and discipline than any others.
>
> NCES, 1991

Wayne and Rubel (1982) point out other effects of student fear:

Apprehensiveness among students has an obvious impact on the business of education: it reduces concentration on assigned tasks, creates an atmosphere of mistrust, and undermines school morale. More subtly, the school administrator's inability to reduce fear directly tells students that staff are not in control of the school's social climate—that student disorder is more powerful than the adult call for order. (230-231)

Students who feel afraid in school are often those who end up committing acts of aggression or violence. Conversely, aggressive students who are placed in a secure and contained environment are likely to demonstrate more internal control over their own actions. Left in an unsafe environment, they develop a mistrust of adults, experience increased feelings of fear, and demonstrate inappropriate behaviors that become progressively harder to modify (Ditter, 1988).

The threat or existence of violence or crime in the school and community can prevent students from taking advantage of after-school educational, recreational, and employment opportunities that can be of immense value for their personal and professional development. Many youths and their parents are persuaded that it is not safe for young people to attend night school, participate in after-school activities, or work at a job that requires late hours (Wetzel, 1988, p. 5).

In addition to the risk of physical harm resulting from school violence, teachers, too, can suffer emotional effects. Studies reveal that some teachers who have witnessed violent incidents, fear violence, or cope daily with disruptive students, exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. They can suffer from fatigue, headaches, stomach pains, and hypertension (Gaustad, 1991). Because teachers are given limited training on how to deal with aggressive or violent students in their classrooms, trying to maintain order and teach class at the same time often leads to stress and feelings of ineffectiveness, thus fueling teacher burnout and high attrition rates (McKelvey, 1988). Some teachers even fall into the same trap as students and bring weapons to school to protect themselves.

Establishing a safe and disciplined learning environment is essential to having a productive school and successful students. This type of environment should be a major outcome of a comprehensive school improvement plan because if students and teachers do not feel safe, for whatever reason, learning cannot take place. Strategies that target violence—such as conflict resolution to reduce fights, aggressive behavior, and other conflicts—can also enhance other improvement efforts by increasing time spent on learning or making instructional strategies work better.

Traditional approaches—the strong-arm dean responding after the fact, corporal punishment, addressing only behavior and not its causes—cannot in isolation produce a safe school environment. Such approaches "manage" a crisis but do not lead to lasting resolutions. Comprehensive policies and strategies are needed. Schools cannot, of course, address the primary roots of violence which may stem from characteristics of the individual or conditions at home or in the community. But schools can play an important role in addressing violence by assessing what factors at the school may encourage or prevent violence. For example, schools may be structured and have programs or policies that contribute to violent or aggressive behaviors, such as a school climate that tolerates fighting or harassment or inconsistent enforcement of the code of conduct.

A safe environment comes from the establishment of a framework that includes prevention, a comprehensive safety and crisis plan, and the combined efforts of everyone at the school as well as families and the community. Together these groups need to assess factors contributing to both the problems and their solutions, develop action plans and strategies, and determine progress. Successful plans and strategies include a continuum of efforts from prevention (conflict resolution and classroom management) to intervention (peer mediation and student assistance programs), to alternative placements (second-chance schools). Effective plans help reduce the risk factors that lead to violence and promote factors that reduce violence.

Component areas of this framework are discussed in this and succeeding chapters, including information on how to reduce risk and promote resiliency, needs assessment, prevention and intervention strategies, and sensitivity to the symptoms and roots of violent and aggressive behavior.

Building Resiliency: Risk and Protective Factors

A growing body of research suggests that the most effective approach for preventing destructive behavior in youth is to address the risk factors particular to one or more problem behaviors as well as the protective factors that are common to all. An approach of this kind

- Identifies risk and protective factors in a given environment for a particular population
- Identifies strategies by which these factors might be addressed
- Uses these strategies with the appropriate population
- Evaluates the impact these strategies have on the focus population

Risk factors are conditions in a child's environment that can be used to predict future problem behavior. Exposure to particular risk factors increases the likelihood that a child will engage in specific types of problem behavior in the future. Protective factors are conditions that predict future success. Exposure to environments rich in protective factors buffers against the effect of risk factors by developing characteristics in a child that make him or her resilient. The resilient child is able to adapt productively to stressful environments, negotiate life situations successfully, and avoid engaging in problem behaviors.

Risk Factors

Hawkins, Catalano, and their associates at the University of Washington (1992) identified risk factors for five adolescent problem areas:

- Violence
- School dropout
- Substance abuse
- Delinquency
- Teen pregnancy

> Safe schools are orderly and purposeful places where students and staff are free to learn and teach without the threat of physical and psychological harm.
>
> California State DOE, *Safe Schools: A Planning Guide for Action*, 1989

The studies demonstrated that the risk factors identified for each problem area predicted later problem behavior across racial, cultural, and socioeconomic groups. They found that the more risks children experienced, the greater the chance the children would eventually engage in the problem behavior associated with the risk factors. They also concluded that risk factors had different degrees of impact depending upon the age of the child.

Risk and protective factors are present in multiple areas or domains of a child's living and learning environments. Effective prevention programs assess and address risk factors in four domains: school, community, family, and individual/peer group. Table 1 shows the network of risk factors, their various domains, and the connections among the domains. Those who focus on school safety must consider risk and protective factors in multiple domains rather than focusing entirely on factors in the school domain because children will carry the experience of factors from other domains to school, where violent behavior might be displayed.

Table 1 might at first glance suggest that there are very few risk factors over which a school has control. This is only partly true; school personnel cannot have much impact on family histories or the availability of drugs in a community. However, schools can work with families and communities to help address these factors. In fact, it is only through such collaborative efforts that students can hope to overcome the risks they face at school, home, in their community, and within themselves. Working with others, the school can help to reduce the number and level of risk factors faced by students and promote protective factors.

Protective Factors

The Social Development Strategy developed by Hawkins et al. (1992) illustrates the role of protective factors in buffering exposure to risk. In this model, bonding to pro-social institutions (such as schools that provide opportunities, skills, and rewards for pro-social involvement) and norms for healthy behavior are protective factors that decrease the influence of risk factors in the various domains of the child's life. Hawkins et al. advocate prevention planning that focuses on addressing multiple risk factors with multiple strategies, is developmentally appropriate, reinforces bonding, and provides clear and consistent norms for behavior.

Benard (1991) advocates adopting approaches that foster the development of protective factors. Noting that not all individuals exposed to risk develop problem behaviors, she identified factors associated with resilient individuals. From these studies, Benard developed a profile of the resilient child and the protective factors that fostered the resiliency.

Benard found that resilient children—those who had survived any of a variety of adverse conditions—came from environments that provided care and support, high expectations, and opportunities for participation in their school, community, or family. Examples of how the

Table 1
Risk Factors

School Risk Factors

- Early and persistent antisocial behavior—predicts substance abuse, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.
- Academic failure beginning in elementary school—predicts substance abuse, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.
- Lack of commitment to school—predicts substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.
- Lack of clear discipline policies at school, uneven enforcement, focus on petty infractions, Draconian methods, misplaced school priorities, and school staff that do not reflect the student body—predicts disruptive behavior, defiance, apathy, delinquency, school dropout, and violence.

Community Risk Factors

- Availability of drugs predicts substance abuse.
- Availability of firearms predicts delinquency and violence.
- Community laws and norms favorable toward drug use, firearms, and crime predict substance abuse, delinquency, and violence.
- Media portrayal of violence predicts violence.
- Transitions and mobility predict substance abuse, delinquency, and school dropout.

  Low neighborhood attachment and community disorganization predict substance abuse, delinquency, and violence.
- Extreme economic deprivation predicts substance abuse, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.

Family Risk Factors

- A family history of problem behavior predicts substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.
- Family management problems predict substance abuse, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.
- Family conflict predicts substance abuse, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.
- Favorable parental attitude toward and involvement in the problem behavior predict substance abuse, delinquency, and violence.

Individual/Peer Risk Factors

- Alienation and rebelliousness predict substance abuse, delinquency, and school dropout.
- Friends who engage in the problem behavior predicts substance abuse, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.
- Favorable attitudes toward the problem behavior predicts substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.
- Early initiation of the problem behavior predicts substance abuse, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.
- Constitutional factors predict substance abuse, delinquency, and violence.

Communities That Care, DRP Inc., Seattle, Washington, 1994

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Table 2

Protective Factors

Fostering Resiliency Within the School

Caring and Support

- Create a nurturing staff and positive role models.
- Ensure creative, supportive leadership dedicated to the school's mission.
- Develop an orderly, flexible climate that is warm, responsive, and quiet without being oppressive.
- Offer support and mentoring from staff and peers.

High Expectations

- Maintain high expectations of all students and staff.
- Assure minimum mastery of basic skills by all students.
- Avoid negative labeling and tracking.
- Emphasize cognitive development.
- Monitor student progress frequently.

Opportunities for Participation

- Spend more time on task.
- Individualize instruction.
- Use a culturally diverse curriculum.
- Encourage a variety of experiences to discover each child's talents.
- Enable students to take part in meaningful activities and value their contributions.
- Encourage parents and community participation in direct instruction, recognize student progress, and communicate expectations.

Fostering Resiliency Within the Community

Caring and Support

- Offer support of families and schools.
- Promote and support development of social networks.
- Provide resources necessary for healthy development.

High Expectations

- Establish high expectations and clear norms for families and schools.
- Assure youth that they are valued as resources.
- Establish norms for healthy behavior.

Opportunities for Participation

- Encourage active participation and collaboration of families and schools in the community.
- Create meaningful opportunities for youth to contribute to their community and to serve others.

Fostering Resiliency Within the Family

Caring and Support

- Promote caring and support of the child.
- Encourage involvement with child in school activities.
- Encourage involvement with school.
- Monitor time child spends with peers, watching TV, at home, at school, and in church-related activities.
- Develop supportive and affectionate relationships.
- Practice high-warmth, low-criticism parenting.
- Pay attention to good nutrition.

High Expectations

- Communicate to child high expectations of academic and social performance.
- Develop daily routines that impart time management and organizational skills through structure, discipline, and clear rules.

Opportunities for Participation

- Provide a variety of experiences to discover the child's talents.
- Encourage children to participate and contribute to their family in meaningful ways.
- Ensure that children have domestic chores to develop responsibility.

(Benard, B., 1991; Kunjufu, J., 1984)

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protective factors may be manifested in these areas are provided in Table 2. A school might provide caring and support with an orderly, responsive climate and supportive staff and peers. Further, by establishing high expectations for all students and staff and avoiding negative labeling, the school can promote high achievement. Finally, by allowing more time to complete tasks and providing a variety of experiences for self-discovery, another protective factor, "opportunities for participation," might be provided.

Benard's profile of the resilient child, fostered through an environment which provides the protective factors described above, includes the following characteristics:

- Social Competence: The child is flexible, empathetic, and caring; has good communication skills; and can use humor in stressful situations.
- Problem-Solving Skills: The child is able to think critically and generate alternative solutions to both cognitive and social problems. The child has good planning skills and can negotiate demands of an environment and produce change.
- Autonomy: The child has a sense of independence, power, and internal control and can engage in adaptive distancing from dysfunctional parents.
- Sense of Purpose and Future: The child has realistic and high expectations, is goal-directed, has educational/career aspirations, has persistence and hardiness, and resists learned helplessness and feeling like a victim. The child's life has a sense of coherence and meaning and a compelling future—this is the characteristic most associated with success.

A child exposed to enough protective factors to develop characteristics of resiliency is likely to respond productively despite exposure to numerous environmental risk factors. Therefore, schools should work with families and the community to develop environments for children that are rich in caring and support, high expectations, and opportunities for participation and concentrate on developing resilient characteristics in students. Schools are in a unique position to help foster these characteristics because their development is important to the learning process.

Assessment and Program Planning

Each school needs to set up a process to assess its safety needs, including the presence of risk and protective factors, before a program plan is developed. Since the scope of violence varies from school to school, each school should set up its own individualized assessment and plan. Plans need to be based on factors or needs at the school. It may be tempting to implement a safety program by putting some strategy in place because it is well known, inexpensive, or was successful in a nearby school. In the short run, this approach may reduce some violence or discipline problems at school. But in the long run, incidents of violence may increase because time has not been taken to assess the scope of the school's problem. For example, a school needs to know what specific kinds of problems it has. Is it fights, theft, or something else? How extensive is the problem? Does it happen every day and all over campus? Are there already programs in place to deal with the problem? If so, why aren't they working?

Establishing the School Safety Committee

A first step in assessment and planning is establishing a school safety committee and empowering it to carry out a needs assessment and develop a comprehensive plan. The committee should be small enough to be manageable but large enough to include the major players—teachers, administrators, students, counselors, security personnel, parents, members of the school advisory council—so that all voices will be heard. It is vital that the school principal, an assistant principal, or another high-level administrator be on the committee and reserve time to participate. Without such support, the recommendations of the committee will carry little authority.

Assessing School Needs

The school safety committee should make plans to do a schoolwide needs assessment to measure and understand the scope of the problem. The committee can review incident reports to identify what kinds of crimes are committed, who commits them, and where the crimes take place. The committee can also gather useful material from truancy and attendance records, attitude surveys, focus groups, and informal interviews with students, faculty, staff, parents, and community members. With this information in hand, the safety committee can begin to seek answers to the following types of questions:

Table 3

Protective Factor Inventory Worksheet

	Caring and Support/Bonding	High Expectations	Opportunities for Participation	Norms for Healthy Behavior
Community				
School				
Family				

Southeast Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities

- What are the main safety problems faced at the school, and how is school violence perceived by the students, teachers, parents, school security, school and district administrators, and police? Is the main problem crime, disruptive behavior, outsiders coming onto the campus, etc.?
- What is the current plan, and how well does it meet school needs?
- How are criminal acts committed at the school handled? Are existing discipline procedures applied? Are all or selected incidents reported to the police? Are parents informed? Are juvenile authorities involved?
- How do police respond to school crime?
- What risk factors are present at the school?
- What protective factors are present at the school?

(*Blount*, 1986)

At the school level, there are a variety of ways to obtain input from concerned participants, particularly teachers, staff, and students who are at the leading edge of the confrontation with school violence. Grossnickle et al. (n.d.) suggest the use of a school discipline climate survey of school staff as a beginning in analyzing policy and procedure trends. Improving the discipline climate of a school involves:

- Identifying a shared vision of local discipline standards
- Comparing these standards to an assessment of current levels of satisfaction
- Comparing staff expectations with the current levels of satisfaction to determine discrepancies
- Developing specific plans to address areas of concern or disagreement

District officials should stress to school administrators that problems with violence are not indicative of poor leadership. To encourage principals to acknowledge the existence of a problem, district officials should respond with suggestions and assistance rather than recriminations (Gaustad, 1991). An assessment that provides a clear picture of the current situation can serve as the foundation for long-term prevention efforts. States or large districts can help by forming safety check teams to visit schools that request help. The teams can review discipline policies, building security, and prevention strategies and offer recommendations and assistance for improvements.

Setting Priorities

The school safety committee can now analyze the information it has gathered during the assessment about safety and risks in the school and community and begin planning for a comprehensive program. Several factors should be kept in mind as information is reviewed. First and foremost, the information about what is currently happening at the school should be compared to the vision of where the school and/or school advisory council wants the school to be. This vision may or may not be outlined in a school improvement or reform plan. Second, this information can be analyzed relative to the risk and protective factors outlined in Tables 1 and 2. A worksheet that can help committees identify protective factors at the school is provided in Table 3.

Since not all needs can be addressed even under the best of circumstances, priorities must be established. School committees can order needs and risk and protective factors according to which are the most prevalent, hazardous, likely to yield success, predictive of the greatest numbers of problems, etc., or which best complement the school's improvement plan.

At this point, the vital first stage of the process is complete. However, the expected outcomes of the program must be stated in measurable terms so committee members can choose among potential activities and evaluate programs already underway.

Forming Measurable Objectives

Objectives help direct the program and frame evaluation of efforts. Team members should formulate objectives that describe the desired impact of prevention efforts on identified problems or factors. Objective statements tell how the selected factors will be changed by the application of a strategy or strategies. They describe the desired outcomes or changes in participant performance or behaviors that result directly from the program activities.

To evaluate the success of various activities, one must have ways to measure outcomes (as stated in objectives). Therefore, when writing objectives, it is crucial to include phrases that express all the components noted in the examples below:

- Conditions for Achievement
  Where, in what time frame, and in what circumstances will the changes happen (e.g., Lincoln High School; 1997-98, after completion of a training program)?
- Focus Population
  Who will be positively affected by changes in risk and protective factors? Whose behavior will change (e.g., middle school students or girls in grades 3 and 4)?
- Indicators to Evaluate
  What provides evidence of change (e.g., decrease in vandalism or truancy; increase in GPA)?
- Criteria for Achievement
  How much change is desired (e.g., 10-percent reduction, 50-percent increase, 80 percent of participants, 15 new members)?

Objectives for reducing academic failure beginning in an elementary school might look like this:

Objectives/Outcome:

- By May 1998, 80 percent of 4th-6th graders who have participated in peer-led academic mentoring activities will show increased academic success as measured by GPAs, portfolio scores, and standardized testing of cognitive skills development.
- By the end of the 1997-98 school year, all of the 4th-6th grade students will have taken part in either peer mediation training or conflict avoidance skills training and will have successfully completed the school's curriculum module on core values.
- By the end of the 1997-98 school year, 4th-6th graders will show improved conduct as indicated by a 25-percent decrease in discipline referrals.

Statements such as these guide the implementation of programs and contain concrete measures with which to recognize their success.

Selecting Strategies to Build a Program

With the school's needs assessed and objectives clearly stated, the activities that will lead to accomplishing the objectives may now be developed. At this stage, the school safety team must describe the specific tasks that will enable program objectives to be accomplished, such as developing participant recruitment for peer programs, planning training, preparing materials, or creating a timeline. As programs are implemented, those who carry out the activities will need to record the process of how various activities were executed. Maintaining careful records of this kind will further facilitate program evaluation by describing program activity and context: team members can locate breakdowns or successes in the series of practical decisions and in events that influenced program effectiveness.

Since a tremendous variety of school safety programs have already been designed and are available, a planning team needs ways of selecting among these approaches based on which are most likely to produce the impacts and outcomes outlined in the school plan. A planning team will want to choose strategies with research-documented success in reducing the problems or needs identified as priorities. Unless the strategy has been demonstrated to affect these priority factors, the team has little assurance that the prevention program incorporating that strategy will reduce the incidence of problem behaviors.

The risk and protective factor planning model offers some guidance in selecting strategies. The assumptions that frame the model suggest a systematic way of considering available strategies that might meet the planners' particular program needs. The model's Prevention Planning Principles, converted into question form, become a useful test of potential strategies and program packages:

- **Focus on addressing known risk factors.** Does this strategy focus on reducing the identified risk factors?
- **Focus on increasing protective factors.** Does this approach enhance the desired protective factors?
- **Address risk factors at appropriate developmental stages.** Have we tailored our program to the cognitive and emotional skills of the focus population?
- **Intervene early before the behavior stabilizes.** Do the program's strategies allow us to affect the focus population early enough to have maximum effect?
- **Include populations that are exposed to the greatest number of risks.** Will this strategy affect those at greatest risk? Are there other populations with similar or greater combinations of risks?
- **Address multiple risks with multiple strategies.** Does our combination of strategies enable us to reduce several risks and enhance protective factors in various ways?
- **Address racial, cultural, and economic diversity.** Is this program sensitive to the different risks faced by different groups, and does it draw on the different strengths each group has available?

Once a school safety committee has assessed school needs and identified risk and protective factors, the process of implementing violence prevention programs begins. The rest of this document suggests ways in which administrators, principals, teachers, students, and parents can develop their plans and ideas for promoting a safe and productive learning environment. ●

Chapter 2
Prevention Strategies

There are a number of components involved in creating a safe school environment, including school climate, strong leadership, fair and consistent student monitoring and discipline, a crisis management plan, a continuum of prevention and intervention policies and programs, staff development, safe facilities and transportation, and partnerships with families, the school neighborhood, and the community. This section includes discussion of all of the above elements except intervention and crisis planning, which is covered in the section on Crisis Management and Intervention Strategies.

Essential Prevention Components

Positive School Climate

A positive school climate is vital to preventing violence. If students, parents, and staff feel a sense of community and ownership in the school, they are more likely to work with, rather than against, each other. If a school has a climate in which staff, students, and parents feel safe and welcome, victims of violence may find the healing process easier as the school reestablishes its supportive and secure atmosphere.

The physical climate is also important. According to a report from the U.S. Department of Education (1988), the more the school looks like a workshop, library, restaurant, or conference center and less like a prison or institution, the more conducive the environment is to learning. While principals are aware of the benefits of having a positive school climate, it is useful for a school safety committee or school improvement team to examine efforts to improve the school climate to determine if those efforts include addressing the specific issue of school safety.

Strong Leadership

The principal is critical in developing a positive school climate and a safe school. Principals who have succeeded in creating safe and peaceful schools out of violence-ridden campuses emphasize the importance of maintaining a high profile as well as individual and group contacts with students (Greenbaum, Turner, & Stephens, 1989). In addition to walking the halls and school grounds regularly (a considerable deterrent to crime and violence), these principals frequently visit classrooms and always make themselves available to teachers, students, and parents who wish to meet with them. They keep in touch with formal and informal student leaders to get their perspectives on school events and to enlist support in involving more students in school activities. Ciminillo (1980) stresses that principals "must express sincere feelings toward students, a genuine interest in their lives, and a real belief that they have the potential to become successful adults" (87).

Student Monitoring and Discipline

A discipline code should be developed that clearly identifies school rules and acceptable student behaviors. As Greenbaum, Turner, and Stephens (1989) point out, "We tend to get not only what we expect, what we deserve, and what we measure, but also, perhaps most impor-

Creating a Familial Atmosphere

At George Washington High School in Los Angeles, the school motto is "We are Family." Former principal George McKenna, now superintendent of the Inglewood (California) School District, believes a familial atmosphere is crucial in keeping crime and violence out of school.

All students are asked to sign a nonviolence contract with their parents, and the school conducts periodic peace marches in the community. Primary goals of the activities are to maintain a positive school climate where students feel safe and send the message that students do not need to bring a weapon to school (NSSC, 1990c).

For more information, contact
George Washington High School
10860 South Benker Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90047
213-757-9281

tantly, what we 'put up with.' The three F's of good school administration include being firm, friendly, and fair–in that order" (59). The best discipline code is easy to understand, with clearly stated consequences for infractions (NSSC, 1990b). Successful codes of conduct are written with student input and clearly define the roles, rights, and responsibilities of all persons involved in the school. According to Gottfredson (1983), the code should include only rules that will be enforced: "If the code violation is not worth disciplining, it is not worth being in the code in the first place. Undisciplined violations breed disrespect and noncompliance" (191). Research on school violence emphasizes the necessity of enforcing discipline codes consistently and fairly (California State DOE, 1989; Gaustad, 1991; NSSC, 1990b; U.S. Department of Justice, 1986). Administrators should, therefore, avoid punishing students as "examples" and discipline all students in the same way for the same behavior.

Successful codes of conduct are written with student input and clearly define the roles, rights, and responsibilities of all persons involved in the school.

The discipline code is not only a set of rules for students to follow, it also informs teachers, parents, and others exactly what kind of behavior is expected of students at a particular school. A copy of the school discipline code should be sent to parents at the start of every school year and distributed to students and staff (Greenbaum, Turner, & Stephens, 1989). The discipline code should be reviewed periodically and updated to reflect changes in the school and surrounding environment. It is important for schools to use standard definitions for code violations so that everyone will understand what specific terms and infractions entail. (See Appendix A for a glossary of terms related to school violence.)

Teachers should be encouraged to discuss the code of conduct with their students, make sure everyone understands its purpose and expectations, and seek agreement from students to follow it. Many schools designate homeroom or a certain class taken by all students, such as English, as the setting for making students aware of policies. This is more effective than trying to tell the entire school at once in an assembly or over the intercom because it allows for discussion in a smaller and less-formal setting.

In addition to explaining the rules of student behavior, codes of conduct should

- Clearly define the roles, rights, and responsibilities of all persons involved in the school setting including students, teachers, administrators, and support staff as well as parents and police
- Provide a system of rewards for positive behavior
- Provide a procedure for student appeals
- Describe the sequence(s) of consequences for misbehavior

(Governor's Task Force on School Violence and Vandalism, 1979, 13-14)

Regarding violent behavior, the National School Safety Center (1990a) recommends that the discipline code clearly state that anyone who is "guilty of assault, violent crime, or weapon possession on campus will be

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Innovative Ideas for Campus Security

The San Diego Unified School District gradually replaced chain link fences with ornamental wrought iron. Security Chief Rascon explains, "Ornamental iron fencing beautifies the campus. Since it doesn't give you the prison look, you can make the fence higher and people don't care. We've gone from 10 feet to 15 feet. You can't cut holes in ornamental iron–you'd have to bring a torch–and you can't climb those fences as easily as chain link fences."

Rascon instituted another unusual security measure in 1974 by turning out the schools' lights at night. In addition to reducing crime, having total darkness in the schools after hours has saved the district several million dollars in utility bills. "It was a radical move," says Rascon, "because we had been brainwashed by electric companies for years that the more lights, the less crime. We have proven that's wrong. To the contrary, I think lights help a burglar to see where the equipment is. We've told the community, if you see a light come on, call the police. And it clicks, it really does" (NSSC, 1990a). The Hillsborough County School system in Tampa, Florida, has recently followed San Diego's example.

For more information, contact
San Diego School Police Department
4100 Normal
San Diego, CA 92103
619-293-8053

Peer Helpers

Students with a problem at Granada Hills High School in Granada Hills, California, can use peer helpers to talk things out. The school has a Peer Assistance Center with both student and adult counselors. An advantage of the program is that students with problems have the option of discussing them with peers in a non-violent, non-confrontational, non-authoritarian, and non-judgmental setting. In addition to counseling, the Center offers information, referrals, and assistance to combat drug and alcohol use and help with issues such as child abuse, coping with adult authority, death and illness, improving communication, family concerns, financial problems, gang violence, handling emotional crises, health and legal issues, peer pressure, running away, etc. (NSSC, 1990c).

For more information, contact
Peer Assistance Center
Grenada Hills High School
10535 Zelzah Avenue
Grenada Hills, CA 91344
818-360-2361, ext. 375

arrested, and the school will vigorously assist in prosecuting the offender" (130). The Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 requires schools that receive funding under the Improving Schools Act of 1994 not only to notify law enforcement if a student brings a firearm onto campus, but also to expel the student for at least one year. (See Appendix E for more information.) Greenbaum, Turner, and Stephens (1989) also recommend that the following rules be included in a school discipline code:

- Striking another person may be considered a criminal act and may be dealt with as such.
- Every student has a right to be secure and safe from threats and harassment.
- Anyone bringing weapons onto school grounds will be considered armed and dangerous, and the police will be called.
- Crimes against property and any other violations of the law will be treated as such (60).

In addition, a discipline code should also include policy against

- Bigotry
- Hate crimes
- Bullying
- Stalking
- Sexual assault
- Sexual harassment

The discipline code is not only a set of rules for students to follow, it also informs teachers, parents, and others exactly what kind of behavior is expected of students at a particular school.

The policies should explain what kinds of actions will be deemed as violations and provide for appropriate sanctions. When writing the discipline code, adminis-

Using Students to Keep Order

At many middle and high schools, students help increase student safety and encourage responsible behavior. Students work in groups of two to three and wear badges to distinguish themselves. Before school opens each morning, they are posted around school grounds to help discourage vandalism. During class changes, they monitor the halls to provide assistance to students and report disruptive incidents. Students interested in joining the "patrols" are first screened by its student officers, then chosen based on conduct, attendance, and grades. In many cases, serving on the patrols has been a successful and positive incentive for disruptive students.

At Southridge Senior High in Miami, "Spartan Patrols" provide crowd control and patrol hallways between classes. Seventy students now participate in the program, all of whom are also members of the school's Youth Crime Watch program, which is the largest in the nation.

Members of the Spartan Patrol represent a cross-section of the school population, and several are former gang members. (The ex-gang members are often the most effective patrol members.) Participants in the program receive recognition from the school and are eligible to attend special programs and rallies, particularly in the area of drug education.

As a result of the program, school crime—especially trespassing and gang-related violence—has decreased. In addition, fights at the school have been virtually eliminated.

For more information, contact
Southridge Senior High School
19355 Southwest 114th Avenue
Miami, FL 33157
305-238-6110

Gun Awareness

The Dade County (Florida) school district was the nation's first to offer a mandatory "gun awareness" program to all of its K-12 students. The purpose of the program is simple: to let students know that guns kill. Through lectures, skits, and films, elementary school children are taught to stay away from firearms and to alert an adult if they see a gun where it does not belong.

The curriculum for grades seven to twelve delivers the same message with graphic reinforcement; doctors from the University of Miami's medical center demonstrate, with slides and charts and in unflinching detail how, for example, a bullet rips through body tissue and can sever the spinal cord. The program is supported by local law enforcement agencies and by the larger community.

For more information, contact
Bill Harris
Gun Control Department
School Board of Dade County
1500 Biscayne Boulevard
5BAB Annex
Room 316E
Miami, FL 33132
305-995-1986

trators need to decide how they will distinguish between criminal and non-criminal acts and what actions will be taken (U.S. Department of Justice, 1986). Gaustad (1991) reminds administrators that many of the altercations that take place in school—such as bullying, threats, intimidation, and fights in which one student is the victim—are indeed crimes. Consistent rule enforcement will require administrators to always deal with these activities using the same set of standards.

The discipline code should also delineate the punishment offenders can expect as a consequence of violent or criminal acts. Whether after-school detention is imposed or criminal charges are brought, each violation should carry a punishment consistent with the level of the infraction.

Staff Development and Inservice

Just as any school improvement effort requires staff development, efforts to improve a school's safety must address the informational and hands-on training needs of teachers and other school staff. Staff safety workshops might emphasize the relationship between a safe school and a quality education as well as the need for public support of the school and the importance of

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safety to garner that support (Greenbaum, Gonzalez, & Ackley, 1989). Such workshops would also include information about proposed violence prevention strategies and the specific responsibilities of school staff for maintaining a safe environment.

Staff development in violence prevention may be provided by a variety of community resources (many of them available at little or no cost) including police officers, lawyers, judges, health and human service providers, probation officers, and representatives from institutions for juvenile offenders (Greenbaum, Gonzalez, & Ackley, 1989). Seminars and workshops can be videotaped for future reference and for new employees (California State DOE, 1989). Table 4 suggests topics for staff development seminars that can be offered as part of the school's comprehensive violence reduction plan.

Table 4

Possible Topics for Anti-Violence Seminars

- Social and other problems contributing to school crime and violence
- Understanding diverse cultures
- Implementation of disciplinary policies and procedures
- The law and school security
- General security of the school plant
- Laws regarding search and seizure
- The criminal justice system and the juvenile offender
- Victims' rights issues
- Sexual harassment and assault
- Date rape
- Illegal drugs on campus
- Gang awareness
- Intervening in a fight
- Managing a confrontation
- Reporting acts of violence
- The evolutionary development of a confrontation
- Crowd management at athletic and special events
- Bomb threat procedures
- Current discipline techniques for more responsive and positive interactions with misbehaving and troubled youth
- Effective classroom management
- First aid and CPR
- Unarmed self-defense
- Identifying and reporting child abuse
- Referring drug and alcohol use problems

(Blount, 1986; California State DOE, 1989; Ciminillo, 1980; Gaustad, 1991; Governor's Task Force, 1979; NSSC, 1990b; Rapp et al., 1992)

Prevention Policies and Programs

Enhancing Campus Safety

The key to long-term strategies for enhancing school safety is emphasizing proactive and preventive measures over reactive ones. Initiatives such as installing metal detectors, hiring extra armed guards, or searching students should be used strategically and with caution. Effective administrators avoid inadvertently instilling more fear and mistrust in students by implementing policies that are excessively oppressive or demeaning or that risk violating students' rights. As Gaustad (1991) cautions, "Even the best deterrence efforts can't totally eliminate the possibility of violence, and putting too much emphasis on security may frighten children unnecessarily" (36).

> This nation should not consider the human loss, not to mention property damage, we annually suffer from crime and violence in our schools as an acceptable cost in educating our children. Schools must respond to school crime and violence by assuring students a safe, peaceful, secure, and welcoming educational environment.
>
> A. Rapp, F. Carrington, & G. Nicholson, *School Crime and Violence: Victims' Rights*, 1992

As school violence has escalated and steadily encroached into lower age groups, many schools have made school resource officers (SROs) or other security personnel permanent fixtures on their campuses. As part of the life of a school, effective security officers provide a balance of prevention, enforcement, authority, and education. In some situations, however, establishing order may require stronger-than-usual deterrents and controls such as the use of police officers (in addition to the school resource officer) or metal detectors. If violence at a school is serious enough to warrant such tactics, they must (1) be tailored to meet the problem at hand, (2) employ easy-to-understand procedures, (3) be used fairly and evenly, and (4) be clearly explained to all. In addition, plans should be made for gradually

Table 5

Strategies that Help Reduce Violence in School

Increasing Surveillance and Supervision Around the School

- Assign school staff to patrol problem areas such as hallways, stairwells, locker rooms, bathrooms, cafeterias, and school grounds.
- Train parents, students, or other volunteers to be hall monitors. As monitors, these volunteers would not have the same authority as police/security officers, but they can be eyes and ears that detect developing conflicts and also report violent situations to school authorities.
- Designate a safe, centralized location for students and staff to gather if safety is a concern before and after school. Ask teachers who work early or late to work in pairs or teams in the designated area.
- Map out the safest routes and escort students as needed in neighborhoods where students are afraid to walk to and from school. Encourage students to walk in groups and ask police to patrol the routes that students use during the morning and afternoon.
- Hire security officers to patrol the school, check student identification, and be present at athletic events and other school activities. Some large school districts have their own police force trained to work with students and hired to handle school crime. If officers are to be viewed as actual "resources" for students–not just as enforcers–they should be accessible to students. They should also be provided training in working and talking with young people and in the cultural backgrounds of the students.

(Gaustad, 1991; NSSC, 1990b)

Keeping Weapons Out of School

- Announce and post the school's policy against weapons possession and the consequences of bringing weapons to school.
- Clearly define what constitutes a weapon (see Appendix A for definitions).
- Limit or prohibit student access to cars during the school day.
- Define lockers as equipment of the school district, which students are allowed to use temporarily for convenience; specify that lockers are not private storage spaces. Post signs in the halls that clearly state that, if administrators are given reasonable suspicion, lockers can and will be searched. Notify students if their lockers will be searched, and allow individual students to be present.
- Refer all weapons offenders for counseling.

(CDC, 1992; Dade County Public Schools, 1988; Grant, 1992; Morgenthau et al., 1992; NSSC, 1990a, 1990b; Prophet, 1990)

Keeping Unauthorized Persons Off Campus

- Limit and supervise the entry and movement of persons on school grounds; monitor delivery and loading entrances as well as main doors.
- Provide a list of visitor regulations to students, parents, and community members, and post it at all entrances.
- Require visitors to sign in at the main office and wear identification badges while at the school.
- Use I.D. cards or another identification system for students.
- Designate one entrance for visitors during the school day, and enforce this policy at all other entrances.
- Install emergency alarms on rarely used doors to discourage their use.
- Register all staff and student cars with the school, and require parking stickers for legal parking on school grounds.
- Seek a formal agreement from gang members that the school will be neutral territory. Prohibit all gang-related activities and traits–such as special clothing, hairstyles, colors, insignias, and hand gestures–in school and at school-sponsored events. Be especially wary of non-student gang members loitering around school campuses.
- Keep a record of all cars that enter school parking lots illegally. Note the make, style, color, and license plate number as well as the date seen. Refer to this record in case of theft, vandalism, or intrusions.
- Establish a closed campus policy and require all who enter or leave the school during the day to sign in and out.
- Question anyone loitering outside the school.
- Station security/police officers at athletic and other school-sponsored events. Announce to students in advance the behavior that will be expected of them.
- If an unauthorized person is determined to be a student from another school, notify the student's home school and ask that the student's parents be notified.

(Dade County Public Schools, 1988; Gaustad, 1991; NSSC, 1990a; Speck, 1992)

Enlisting Support for Preventing Violence

- Hold group forums to encourage students and/or parents to express opinions and concerns about the school's safety and to ask questions about school policies.

(Continued)

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Table 5 continued

- Devise a school reporting system to enable students, staff, and parents to report violent behavior or suspected trouble anonymously. Offer rewards.
- Suggest that students avoid wearing valuable clothing, shoes, and jewelry to schools where thefts are likely.
- Have teachers, administrators, counselors, and others meet regularly as a team to discuss problems of disruptive students, and plan individual strategies to help them before they become violent.
- Invite parents and students to contribute ideas about school safety in a suggestion box. Respond to all comments and personally thank those who make useful recommendations. Such a container can also serve as a "nomination box" for recognizing employees or students who have made a significant contribution to school safety efforts.
- Ask school psychologists, counselors, and/or teachers to visit the homes of disruptive and potentially violent students.
- Act on rumors; talk to students who are rumored to be having behavioral or social problems with others; and take seriously student reports of impending conflicts.
- Encourage bus drivers and custodians—who are good sources of information about scheduled fights or weapons brought to campus—to report such information routinely.
- Establish a telephone hotline for input from community members.

(Blauvelt, 1981; California State DOE, 1989; Greenbaum, Gonzalez, & Ackley, 1989; May, 1992; NSSC, 1990a; Perry & Duke, 1978; Prophet, 1990; Rapp et al., 1992)

reducing or phasing them out as other, more positive measures–such as improving the school climate and educating students to be nonviolent–take effect.

School officials will need to remember that providing extraordinary reactive security measures subtracts from the overall budget for improvements in curriculum, staff development, and instructional materials that are necessary to meet the school's mission (Ciminillo, 1980). On the contrary, implementation of conflict resolution training and curricula, for example, can be an effective investment for long-term violence prevention. Table 5 describes a number of strategies for reducing school violence and increasing school safety.

A Safe School Building

When new schools are built, architects, educators, and security experts should work together to design the safest yet most appealing school building possible. Schools might also be located where they are visible from homes and businesses, with all entries and administrative offices visible from bordering streets (NSSC, 1990a). Table 6 offers a number of suggestions for improving the safety of existing school buildings.

Some of the above suggestions are elements of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED is a series of site and building design strategies and principles that are used to prevent or reduce incidents of criminal activity. Elements such as the amount of lighting in stairs and the width and organization of hallways can assist in crime and violence prevention at schools. For example, one school, after analysis of discipline referrals, discovered that most fights were occurring in one hallway. The hallway was found to be dimly lit and thus hard to supervise. Increasing the light in the hallway with additional light fixtures reduced the number of fights by 50 percent.

Peer-Directed Strategies

Students may benefit from long-term behavior modification techniques such as peer mentoring, peer mediation, guided group discussions, or behavior contracts (Governor's Task Force, 1979). Such programs give students a safe and controlled outlet in which they can speak with their peers about their problems and develop solutions. Students are empowered to make decisions about what the consequences of their acts should be.

In peer mediation, students are trained to help other students resolve conflicts. The peer mediators encourage disputants to use nonviolent ways of resolving differences and to arrive at mutually satisfactory solutions. For many students, being able to sit down and talk about disputes without the threat or fear of violence is an entirely new experience. Ideally representative of the entire student body, peer mediators are also trained in conflict management and communication skills to enable them to defuse anger, conflicts, rumors, and tension among their peers (NSSC, 1990b). This training typically includes discussions of possible responses to and consequences of violence as well as role playing of mediated conflicts (CDC, 1992).

Table 6

Creating a Safe School Building

- Light all hallways adequately during the day.
- Close off unused stairwells, or do not leave areas of the school unused.
- Install all lockers in areas where they are easily visible, or remove lockers altogether.
- Minimize blind spots; use convex mirrors by portable classrooms or to allow hall monitors to see around corners.
- Prohibit posters in classroom windows.
- Install an alarm system and/or a closed-circuit television monitoring system.
- Keep buildings clean and maintained.
- Locate playground equipment where it is easily observed.
- Limit roof access by keeping dumpsters away from building walls.
- Cover drainpipes so they cannot be climbed.
- Avoid decorative hedges; plant trees at least ten feet from buildings.
- Trim trees and shrubs to limit outside hiding places for people or weapons.
- Keep school grounds free of gravel or loose rock surfaces.
- Ensure vehicle access around the building(s) for night surveillance and emergency vehicles.
- Design parking lots to discourage through traffic; install speed bumps.
- Mix faculty and student parking.
- Create a separate parking lot for students and staff who arrive early or stay late, and monitor these lots carefully.
- Use fencing and gates with discretion, and choose attractive wrought-iron styles instead of chain link fences. Secure them with heavy-duty padlocks.
- Establish a policy to have the school campus fully lighted or totally dark at night.
- Keep a complete list of staff members who have keys to the building(s).
- Do not allow graffiti to linger on walls. Follow the three "Rs" after discovery—read, record (i.e., photograph or videotape), and remove. Inflammatory bathroom graffiti needs to be removed daily.
- Offer school- or community-based activities for students after school and on the weekends. Institute after-school academic and recreational programs for latchkey students.
- Conduct a thorough background check on anyone applying to work in the school to assure that no one is hired who has been convicted of sexual assault, child molestation, or pornography or has a history of violent criminal behavior. Do not make hiring decisions before the check is completed.

(California State DOE, 1989; CDC, 1992; Gaustad, 1991; May, 1992; NSSC, 1989, 1990a, 1990b; Perry & Duke, 1978; Prophet, 1990; Rapp et al., 1992,; Speck, 1992)

An elementary principal whose school has instituted peer mediation notes these benefits to students:

- Conflict managers learn and reinforce "people skills" that will be useful throughout their lives.
- Conflict-prone students, after repeatedly being guided through the resolution process, learn that they can find peaceful alternatives to conflict and that both sides in a dispute can "win."
- All students who observe the process, even if they are not directly involved as mediators or disputants, learn some of the skills (Welch, 1989, pp. 23, 31).

Another peer-directed strategy is student court (or peer review, honor court, teen court, or peer court), in which students have the authority to make disciplinary decisions about fellow students. Selected by their peers or teachers, these student judges, lawyers, and jurors are trained by local justice system experts to try cases, make real judgments, and pass real sentences (Greenbaum, Gonzalez, & Ackley, 1989). Students on the court have full knowledge of the school's code of conduct and are trained to be consistent and non-judgmental in their actions. In most schools with student courts, offenders have the option of being tried by the student court or accepting standard administrative discipline procedures (Scrimger & Elder, 1981). In the Teen Court program in Bay County, Florida, the recidivism rate of participating juvenile offenders is only six percent as compared to 25 percent for non-participant juveniles.

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Teaching Nonviolence, Problem-Solving Skills, and Alternatives to Violence

An effective way to prevent school violence is to teach students the behaviors, skills, and values that are associated with peaceful behavior within the school as well as the larger community. This section identifies a variety of instructional strategies designed to promote school safety by teaching students how to avoid conflict or resolve it peacefully. Table 7 lists a number of educational ideas to help prevent violence.

One way to approach violence prevention is through classroom management practices. In addition to helping promote nonviolent behavior, the following strategies recommended by the California State Department of Education (1989) help foster academic achievement:

- Integrate students of all academic levels whenever possible.
- Use cooperative learning procedures, and make the development of each student's self-esteem a primary objective of cooperative experiences.
- Encourage parent participation in class activities.

Table 7

Educational Strategies for Violence Prevention

- Teach students about the nature and extent of violence in society and in their community. This is especially important for young people who have a natural tendency to believe they are immortal and to adopt an "it-can't-happen-to-me" attitude. Complement discussions of violence with instruction on how to avoid becoming a victim of crime.
- Prevent hate crimes by discussing and rejecting stereotypes of minority groups, encouraging interaction with members of different cultures, and encouraging an appreciation of diversity. Also, ensure that educational materials reflect the many cultures of this society.
- Use existing courses to teach safety topics. For example, social studies or current events classes can discuss social unrest and resulting violence in society; English classes can write essays on self-esteem or interpersonal conflict; and art classes can design anti-violence posters.
- Teach students about the damaging effects of sexual harassment and sexual assault. From an early age, children can learn the difference between "good touching" and "bad touching" and that "no means no." Older students can have group discussions about dating and relationship expectations.
- Instruct students in laws that affect juveniles and the consequences for breaking these laws. Take students to visit a jail or watch a trial in juvenile court.
- Tell students about the lethal impact of guns and the legal implications of carrying or using a gun. Try to counteract the attractiveness of guns to young people. While emphasizing that students should not carry guns, discuss gun safety as well.
- Videotape television news stories that describe actual incidents involving guns, and have students watch and discuss them.
- Teach both elementary and secondary students to avoid gang activities, and provide them with alternative programs to meet their social and recreational needs. Invite guest speakers who work with gang members, such as law enforcement or probation officers, to speak to classes or assemblies. Former gang members who have "turned their lives around" may also tell stories that inspire students to keep away from gangs.
- Teach problem-solving skills in both academic and social settings.
- Tell students that anger is an acceptable feeling but that acting on anger in violent ways is unacceptable. Teach children how to express their anger nonviolently or to confront the source of the anger with plans to "work it out" through peaceful, problem-solving discussions.
- Offer assistance in finding jobs, especially to students who are at risk of dealing drugs or joining a gang because they feel they have no legitimate way to make a living and take care of themselves.
- Teach students social skills such as how to use self-control, communicate well with others, and form and maintain friendships.
- Talk with students about being "good sports" to discourage the disruptive and sometimes violent behavior that can break out at school athletic events. Encourage coaches, teachers, parents, and other adults to set good examples.

(Bodinger-DeUriarte & Sancho, 1992; CDC, 1992; Ditter, 1988; Gaustad, 1991; Gregg, 1992; Greenbaum, Gonzalez, & Ackley, 1989; *The Killing Grounds*, 1991; NSSC, 1989, 1990b; Prophet, 1990; Scrimger & Elder, 1981)

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Teen Court

Begun in Texas, Teen Court uses volunteer teenage students to serve as officers of the court in determining the "sentences" of youthful offenders. Acting as defense and prosecuting attorneys, bailiffs, jurors, and clerks, students in grades 9 through 12 serve for one school year, abide by the law, and respect the oath of lawyer-client confidentiality. An actual judge presides over the proceedings, and local lawyers and judges design and conduct specialized training for the volunteers.

Teenage lawbreakers guilty of offenses such as petty theft or trespassing are sentenced to community service at agencies and organizations instead of fines. The juvenile offender must be referred to Teen Court, admit guilt to the offense, and be accompanied by a parent or guardian during the pretrial and trial phases. In addition to community service, the jury may sentence the defendants to write essays on their offenses or letters of apology to the victim(s). Offenders are also expected to serve on the Teen Court jury after the sentence is completed.

Teen Court provides participating students an opportunity to develop and demonstrate capacity for self-government and responsible citizenship. The non-profit program is designed as a sentencing alternative to reduce court time and money spent on less serious juvenile offenses and provide a more positive form of restitution for the offenders.

Many former offenders come back to serve as jurors and even lawyers for Teen Court, and the overall recidivism rate of Teen Court offenders is often far lower than that for other youth who go through the traditional juvenile justice system.

Growing in popularity, Teen Court is in the process of forming a national association. For more information about Teen Court, contact

Sharon Zehner
Teen Court Coordinator
Bay County
c/o Bay High School
1200 Harrison Avenue
Panama City, FL 32401
850-747-5191

- Require regular homework assignments to reinforce learning and provide the opportunity for students to practice personal responsibility.
- Involve students in classroom management procedures.
- Keep class size small whenever possible.

> Violence and empathy are mutually exclusive.
> J. Gaustad, *Schools Respond to Gangs and Violence*, 1991

Another way to prevent violence is by paying special attention to aggressive behavior in young students, such as school bullies, whose conduct may eventually lead to more violent behavior. Because these children often lack social and reasoning skills, do not know how to control anger, and tend to be more self-centered than their peers, they need to be taught how to interact more successfully with others. This instruction might range from simple skills, such as how to start a conversation, say "thank you," compliment someone, or ask for help, to much more complicated skills, such as coping with failure or embarrassment, reacting appropriately to an accusation, or setting personal goals (Eron, 1987). Another effective strategy with aggressive young students is to pair them with older students in social or academic settings; those who are bullies in their peer group are more likely to be willing "followers" among older students (Hoover & Hazler, 1991).

Service and Service Learning

Service is not just for punishment. School and community service projects also offer students viable alternatives to violence and have shown excellent promise as a preventive strategy. Students engaged in service, particularly service that is an application of their learning, come to school more often, get into trouble less often, and often earn better grades. Through these projects, students perform beneficial services for their school or community in activities ranging from painting scenery for a school play to doing chores for the elderly. Service-learning projects are integrated with academics through units in which students do environmental restoration, tutor other students, conduct historical research of their community, or other activities as part of their regular studies. Some schools incorporate community service into their regular curricula. For example, graduation requirements for students in Atlanta, Georgia, the state of Maryland, and Dade County, Florida, include 75 hours of service to the community.

Learn & Serve America

The National and Community Service Trust Acts of 1990 and 1993 provide grants to schools and community-based organizations to support the involvement of K-12 students in service projects as an extension of their learning. State departments of education are awarded the funds from the Corporation for National Service and then give mini-grants to schools and community agencies, usually on a competitive basis. The program seeks to engage youth and adults in helping others and themselves as they deal with social problems.

The grant program, called Learn & Serve America, has sponsored thousands of projects involving over one million youth in activities such as tutoring, working with the elderly, researching and restoring environmentally sensitive areas, developing community histories, coaching, peer mediation, advocacy on social issues, recycling, historical preservation, and performance as a means to teach others about important issues. Service activities are integrated into the curriculum; students are not paid for their service.

For more information on Learn & Serve America, contact your state department of education, or write or call

Corporation for National Service
1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
202-606-5000, ext. 136

Designed to promote self-esteem, citizenship, and other qualities, service also helps prevent violent behavior by

- Enhancing students' sense of empowerment as they "give something back" to the community
- Encouraging students to care about others and behave accordingly
- Helping students develop problem-solving, social, and employment skills
- Fostering interaction among students from different racial, socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds
- Providing students opportunities to give help to and receive help from peers (Follman et al., 1992)

Counseling

Counseling is often necessary both for the assailant and the victim in cases involving violence. Forms of counseling include simply providing a "time out" and an opportunity to talk with someone, offering individual or group sessions to discuss problems, working to modify behavior and producing contracts for doing so, or offering educational or therapeutic sessions and seminars. As part of their violence contingency plans, schools and districts should make advance arrangements with local psychologists, therapists, counselors, and others with special experience in dealing with violent offenders, victims, the grieving process, and violence prevention. These experts can be called on short notice in the event of a crisis and can also provide long-term support.

Character Education

Students who cannot follow rules do poorly in school and often disrupt the education of others (McKelvey, 1988). Since some children lack the social skills and self-esteem necessary for appropriate behavior, schools must often take an active role in children's character education. Schools must teach students how to interact positively with others, preparing them for responsible citizenship as adults.

The Character Education Institute identified a list of values that they have determined to be shared by cultures around the world: honesty, justice, tolerance, generosity, kindness, helpfulness, honor, courage, conviction, citizenship, freedom of speech, freedom of choice, the right to be an individual, and the right to equal opportunity and economic security (Grossnickle & Stephens, 1992). Teachers can foster the development of these values by modeling them in school and classroom activities and by teaching students how to resolve disputes, make good decisions, and work cooperatively with others.

Teachers can also help students develop a sense of personal and social responsibility through character education. Lessons on accountability for one's actions, patience and delayed gratification, consequence-guided decision making, and knowledge gained from failures as well as successes may be especially beneficial in countering the development of a "culture of impulse" (Grossnickle & Stephens, 1992).

Mediating Disputes

At Gilmore Middle School in Racine, Wisconsin, inner-city neighborhood children mix with affluent suburban kids and bused-in rural residents, creating what administrators feared could be "a recipe for disaster." Yet Gilmore has had "incredible success" in turning everyday conflicts into constructive learning experiences, due to a program called Mediated Dispute Resolution (MDR). In a typical mediation session, the two antagonists sit down with a trained student mediator in a designated sequestered area. The student explains the ground rules, and usually, in about 20 minutes, the disputants themselves have talked through their problem, brainstormed their own solution, and signed a written agreement.

Students and staff alike support the MDR program. In fact, in about 75 percent of the mediation cases at Gilmore, at least one of the students involved has requested the help of a student mediator. In addition to the success of the program in reducing staff intervention, school administrators and teachers like what the participants are learning: disputants learn to resolve differences in a meaningful way, and student mediators learn a wide range of leadership and coping skills.

For more information, contact
Suzanne Miller
Assistant Principal
Gifford Elementary School
8332 Northwest Avenue
Racine, WI 53406
414-886-7950

In 1982, the Baltimore County (Maryland) Public Schools established a task force to study values education and developed a community consensus for teaching values. Citing the U. S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights as the basis for their program, the task force decided to emphasize values throughout the educational process. Values education in the Baltimore County schools includes the following:

- A K-12 focus on infusing values education into all areas of the curriculum
- The development of skills necessary to determine right from wrong, to understand consequences, and to make appropriate choices
- An opportunity for students to examine and revise the underlying principles that govern their conduct, choices, and attitudes
- The study and practical application of ethics and conduct codes acceptable to society

Conflict Resolution

Just as we cannot expect children to read without first showing them how, we cannot expect them to peacefully resolve their conflicts without instruction and practice. In far too many families, children have no effective role models for conflict resolution; they react violently to stressful situations because that is what they see at home and on television. Accordingly, many schools are establishing formal conflict-resolution programs. Conflict resolution involves teaching students how to resolve disagreements nonviolently by working together to arrive at mutually acceptable compromises. Students are taught to settle disputes by going through the process of conflict resolution, which typically includes active listening, acceptance of others' viewpoints, cooperation, and creative problem-solving. Children, starting as young as age five or six, are taught that preventing violence and resolving conflict can be a "win-win" proposition. The following steps are usually involved in effective conflict resolution:

- Define the problem with mutual agreement on circumstances.
- Generate possible solutions.
- Evaluate solutions and eliminate inappropriate ones.
- Negotiate the most mutually acceptable solution.
- Determine how to implement the decision.
- Assess how well the solution solved the problem.

(Perry & Duke, 1978, p. 85)

In addition, teachers must be trained, parents should participate, and the conflict resolution curricula must be tested and proven. Programs must also be schoolwide, so that the same conflict resolution strategies are consistently used by all members of the school community.

Students can either practice the conflict-resolution process when settling their own disputes, or teachers, par-

Reforming Schools Through Creating Peaceful Learning Environments

Like most large school districts, Palm Beach County, Florida, faced a dilemma about how to deal with students who came to school with a high number of "risk factors" including a propensity for violence. Suspending students for fighting, threatening, and for similar offenses did not seem to be effective. Nor did the use of peer mediation programs alone or isolated conflict resolution curricula. So, in October, 1993, the Palm Beach County School District undertook a districtwide, comprehensive, grade K-12 conflict resolution project.

The premise of the program is that peaceful conflict resolution is key to a productive learning environment and thus to overall school improvement. Schools using the program make it a part of their overall school improvement plan. Conflict resolution strategies become the way the learning environment is structured across all classrooms, and all staff members are trained in and use the same resolution strategies. Teachers model these skills in their interactions with students and other staff.

Based on materials from the Peace Education Foundation, content includes normalizing conflict and making it safe to disagree, establishing "Rules for Fighting Fair," teaching assertive communication, practicing listening skills, formulating anger management plans, and learning peer mediation. Beginning in the primary grades, students learn to value feelings, build friendships, and use "I statements." In the later elementary grades, students learn to attack the problem and not the person and avoid namecalling, blaming, and threatening during disputes. Social responsibility is highlighted in secondary grades through the study of historical figures such as Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King, Jr. In high school, complex issues such as prejudice, sexual harassment, and public policy are all discussed using the basic skills and attitudes developed in earlier lessons. Parents are included in a family component.

Has all this unified effort made a difference? Peer mediation solved over 1,100 conflicts in 32 schools in 1994-1995; it has also impacted student discipline referrals. For example, at S.D. Spady Elementary School in Delray Beach, there were 124 referrals for student-on-student conflicts in one four-month period in 1993. After conflict resolution training, referrals during the same time period in 1994 dropped to five.

For further information, contact
Safe Schools Center
3300 Forest Hill Boulevard
Suite B-121
West Palm Beach, FL 33406-5870
407-357-0352

ent volunteers, or students can be trained as mediators to help disputants resolve their conflicts. In schools with conflict-resolution programs, students report feeling better about themselves and safer at school, teachers report fewer fights and more caring student behavior, and conflicts are handled more quickly and remain resolved. Peer mediation has been especially effective in dealing with bullying behavior (Olweus, 1987). Many schools are finding that some of the best peer mediators are students who had previously been considered troublemakers (Inger, 1991). Given the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to school activities, these students develop a sense of importance while reinforcing skills that can be used when they find themselves in conflict with others.

Building Partnerships

Involving Students

Students have a duty and a right to be involved in the prevention and reduction of school violence. They also have a responsibility to avoid becoming victims to the extent they are able, for example, by walking in groups and avoiding high-risk areas of the campus (Rapp et al., 1992). To ensure student involvement, schools should encourage all students to participate in decisions about school safety and discipline procedures and see that student leaders are trained to represent their fellow students on these issues (Scrimger & Elder, 1981).

The inclusion of students in all phases of developing a comprehensive plan is a "win-win" proposition. Not only are they uniquely positioned to present a first-hand account of many of the causes of violence, but such par-

Table 8

Strategies to Increase Student Involvement in Violence Prevention Efforts

- Create a group of student leaders, representing formal and informal groups, to promote student responsibility for a safe school environment.
- Involve students in decision making about school rules, the discipline code, curriculum, books, and materials, evaluations of teachers and administrators, and the development of after-school recreational, tutoring, and mentoring programs.
- Encourage teachers to involve students in decision making at the classroom level.
- Encourage students to establish local chapters of national safety groups, such as SADD (Students Against Drunk Driving) and Youth Crime Watch.
- Establish a crime prevention club, similar to a neighborhood watch for the school, which involves reporting incidents and offering rewards.
- Teach students to be responsible for their own safety and emphasize the importance of reporting suspicious activities or people on campus. Most administrators in urban school districts find out about a weapon in the school through a student tip.
- Teach courses in personal safety and assertiveness.
- Use students to teach their peers about violence prevention. A similar strategy has been used successfully to teach adolescents about avoiding alcohol, cigarette, and drug use.
- Involve students in service projects to improve the school and community environment and to help them learn personal responsibility.
- Encourage students to perform skits or to role-play about violence.

(CDC, 1992; Gaustad, 1991; Governor's Task Force, 1979; Greenbaum, Gonzalez, & Ackley, 1989; NSSC, 1989, 1990a; Perry & Duke, 1978)

ticipation will also provide students with a sense of empowerment, the loss of which is often a precursor to violence. A national survey reveals that students have some very concrete ideas about violence and its curtailment. In the survey, students recommended the following ways to reduce violence:

- Promote family counseling.
- Include students in forming policies and rules.
- Allow students to help monitor halls and the campus.
- Install metal detectors at all school entrances, and use random canine searches.
- Use hand-held metal detectors to search students before boarding a bus, and install video cameras on buses to cut down on violence.
- Create more serious consequences for students caught bringing weapons to school, and establish a confidential way to report such incidents.
- Establish a "Student Crime Watch" program at school.
- Involve parents and volunteers in monitoring school areas prone to violence, such as halls and cafeterias.
- Hire a full-time police officer to attend all school functions.
- Offer group discussion sessions, and eliminate study halls where students often plan violent attacks.
- Insist that teachers teach every day, since free classroom time often results in fights.
- Do not allow bookbags of any type because weapons are too easily hidden even in clear plastic bags.

(Caudle, 1994)

Involving Parents

The foundation for good discipline begins at home. Parental discipline guides children toward acceptable behavior and teaches them to make wise and responsible decisions. Further, proper discipline helps transmit parents' and society's values. To extend discipline to school, it is important that parents support school rules and let their children know that they are expected to follow those rules.

A. Rapp, F. Carrington, & G. Nicholson, *School Crime and Violence: Victims' Rights*, 1992

Parents may need instruction in skills and strategies that will help them raise nonviolent children. As Hranitz and Eddowes (1990) put it, "Parents usually want the best for their children. An inability to cope with frus-

Involving Parents in Anti-Violence Efforts

- At four Houston, Texas, schools, approximately 60 parents each day volunteer to help deter violence, crime, and drug activity, according to the *Houston Chronicle* (Karkabi, 1992). Parents roam the halls, monitor traffic, carry walkie-talkies, and provide on-the-spot assistance and counseling when needed. At two of the schools, fighting has been reduced by 75 percent.

- Frustrated by the prevalence of drugs and gang-related violence in their schools, a group of local citizens formed Mad Dads in 1990 in Ocala, Florida. Now with over 30 chapters statewide and similar programs in other states, Mad Dads monitor school hallways and events as well as sponsor street patrols, midnight basketball, mentoring and tutoring, a juvenile justice alternative sentencing program, a Boy Scout troop, remedial education, and a summer youth camp. Mad Dads has received financial support from the Governor's Drug-Free Communities program.

For more information, contact
James Stokes at Mad Dads
P.O. Box 3704
Ocala, FL 34778
904-629-3100

trations, stresses, and their own needs often defeats their efforts at successful parenting" (4-5). Table 9 offers suggestions for helping parents raise nonviolent children.

Parent involvement in anti-violence efforts gives legitimacy to school strategies and demonstrates to students that schools and families will not tolerate violence. Parents are more likely to get involved if they are invited to the school and made to feel welcome. Security procedures at the school should be no more threatening to parents than they are to students (NSSC, 1990a). Table 10 provides strategies and activities that schools and districts can employ to increase parent involvement in violence prevention efforts and also help prevent violence at home.

Collaborating with Other Professionals

Developing solutions to the social problems that affect the safety of a school requires expertise often far beyond that of educators.

California State Department of Education, *Safe Schools: A Planning Guide for Action*, 1989

In planning activities and implementing strategies to reduce violence, schools should seek the assistance and expertise of other organizations. Too often, the comprehensive needs of children and youth go unmet due to a lack of interagency collaboration, and the blame for failure gets passed from one agency to another. For example, principals often blame the juvenile justice system for their problems with violent students but admit that they know little about the system, how it operates, or how to work with it (Reaves, 1981). At the same time, law enforcement officials are frustrated by school policies that place disruptive youth out on the streets. Schools can take the lead in seeking to establish collaborative relationships with other agencies so that violence can be reduced, education can be enhanced, and children can be successful.

While the most important collaborative relationship for addressing school violence is between the school and local law enforcement agencies, other agency representatives, including social service providers and policymakers, should also be involved in efforts to reduce and prevent violence among youth.

Law Enforcement

Instead of just calling on police during a crisis or violent incident, schools need to establish and maintain an ongoing relationship with police. This relationship can be initiated by school or district administrators and might begin with an introductory meeting at which both parties brainstorm ways they can help one another. If the police precinct has a public relations officer, he or she can be invited to make the initial visit to the school and talk with principals and other school staff. As collaborative strategies develop, the school and police department will need to establish specific policies regarding each organization's roles and responsibilities in working together (Gaustad, 1991).

Table 9

Suggestions for Helping Parents Raise Nonviolent Children

- Provide parents information on raising and managing children, help in coping with family crises, parenting skills classes, and information on child development.
- Offer family and/or individual counseling, especially in cases of domestic violence or child abuse.
- Develop a "parents' guide" that describes parental responsibilities to prevent violence and legal responsibilities of parents whose children commit acts of violence in school. This information can be supplemented by a listing of family services in the community.
- Inform parents about the effects of alcohol and drug use and tell them the signs to look for in determining whether their children are using drugs.
- Inform parents about gangs in the community. Send home explanations of dress codes that prohibit gang attire, and give parents tips for identifying signs of gang involvement.
- Encourage parents to inform school officials immediately if they suspect that their child is being bullied or victimized at school. Teach them to look for symptoms of victimization in their children, such as a withdrawn attitude, loss of appetite, or hesitation to go to school.
- Notify the parents of both victims and bullies about the problem. Help parents of victims develop strategies for their children to make new acquaintances and form healthy relationships. Help parents of bullies monitor their child's activities, praise prosocial behaviors, and use non-physical punishments for misbehavior at home.
- Discuss student fear and apprehensiveness with parents; be sure they understand the importance of talking with their children about fear related to school and the need to reassure children in whatever way is necessary.
- Educate parents to discourage aggressive behaviors and encourage prosocial behaviors at home.
- Help parents teach their children to be assertive but not aggressive. Advise parents not to tell children to "fight back" but to stand up for themselves verbally. (The "fight-back" message encourages violence and tells children that they are alone in solving their problems.)
- Advise parents that physical punishment legitimizes the use of force and should be avoided as a form of discipline.
- Encourage parents to monitor the television programs and movies that their children see and to limit or eliminate violent programming.
- Encourage parents to teach values at home and foster their children's social responsibility and moral character.
- Teach parents to talk and listen to their children. Emphasize the importance of investing quality time in their children.

(CDC, 1992; Eron, 1987; Gaustad, 1991; Governor's Task Force, 1979; Greenbaum, Turner, & Stephens, 1989; Grossnickle & Stephens, 1992; Hranitz & Eddowes, 1990; Wayne & Rubel, 1982)

Blount (1986) recommends that the principal designate as the "police liaison" the staff member responsible for maintaining discipline in the school. He or she would receive all reports from students, staff, and parents of suspected or actual violent behavior and would make school requests for police assistance or information. Communication from the police liaison would go to a school liaison officer designated by the police department. Together, and in consultation with the school safety committee, these two professionals could establish procedures for sharing information about potential crises, discussing trends in school violence, and reporting criminal incidents to the police (Blount, 1986). School administrators and directors of school security have found that police officers who have experience working with youth in the past, some college education, and good communication skills are usually the best choices for school-police partnerships (Gaustad, 1991).

The U.S. Department of Justice (1986) suggests that schools and law enforcement agencies can assist one another by

- Sharing information on the frequency and proportion of crimes in schools in relation to the same types of crime committed in the community
- Jointly defining offenses and deciding which acts should be addressed cooperatively
- Jointly reviewing policies and procedures for handling students who commit crimes in schools, including guidelines for police entering a school, interviewing students and staff, and making an arrest on school grounds
- Jointly participating in planning and implementing programs to prevent school crime and student misbehavior (61-62)

Table 10

Strategies for Increasing Parental Involvement in School Efforts to Reduce Violence

- Include parent representatives on the school safety committee and school improvement team to help make decisions and recommend strategies.
- Hold some meetings at breakfast, lunch time, or during evenings to allow more parents to participate.
- Send a copy of the school's discipline code to all parents and enlist their support in enforcing it. (See also Appendix D–Sample Parent and Student Discipline Contract.)
- Create a parent telephone network to encourage parents to attend school events and meetings.
- Sponsor a "Generation Night Open House" in which students bring as many family members as possible to tour the school, meet staff, and socialize with other families. Have a photographer take family pictures and display them in the school.
- Call parents at work or send a brief note home to inform them about their children's accomplishments.
- Recruit parents and their children during the summer to help paint, clean, or repair the school and grounds.
- Provide transportation for parents to the school.
- Develop parent/student homework assignments with safety themes, such as comparing school or community crime problems today to those 20 years ago.
- Use parent volunteers to patrol schools and to keep an eye out for escalating conflicts at athletic events.
- Invite parents to be part of a School Crime Watch program, both as organizers and to provide security when needed.

(California State DOE, 1989; Greenbaum, Gonzalez, & Ackley, 1989)

Information sharing among agencies may require state legislation to enable record sharing. Several states have legislatively mandated sharing between the courts, law enforcement, and school. For more information on such legislation, see the section on National, State, and Local School Safety Initiatives and Issues.

As students become more comfortable relating to law enforcement officers, students' appreciation for them and the laws they enforce will increase

A benefit of collaboration between schools and police is that officers have the opportunity to develop positive relationships with students through class presentations and friendly interaction on a daily basis. According to Greenbaum, Gonzalez, and Ackley (1989), as students become more comfortable relating to law enforcement officers, students' appreciation for them and the laws they enforce will increase. Students are, therefore, more likely to report suspicious activity in the school or community when they have gotten to know the police officers through nonconfrontational situations (Gaustad, 1991).

Law enforcement officials also have great potential as mentors and guides for students who may be in or are likely to get into trouble. There have been a number of cases in which police officers have helped former gang members turn their lives around by listening to their problems, treating them as equals, helping them set goals, assisting them in finding jobs, and getting to know their families (Gaustad, 1991). When informing parents and community members about the full-time or occasional presence of police officers on school campuses, such positive results should be highlighted to assure parents that the presence of law enforcement at school does not necessarily mean that there are serious problems (Gaustad, 1991).

Other Agencies

Other collaborative relationships can help schools reduce violence by ensuring that students' basic needs are being met. School staff may wish to contact the following professionals:

- Social service providers (counseling, conflict resolution, parent education)
- Early childhood specialists (social skills, dealing with bullies, identifying child abuse)
- Mental health/family counselors (counseling, therapy in aftermath of violence)
- Medical practitioners (recovery after violence crisis; describing effects of weapons on the body)

School Resource Officers

The School Resource Officer (SRO) program places a law enforcement official in a school full time to provide a variety of services to students and staff. The roles of SROs vary widely from school to school, but their duties can include such activities as instructing classes on law, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, and life skills; teaching the certification course for D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) or similar programs; serving as a visible and positive image for law enforcement; offering counseling to students; and providing law enforcement on the campus.

Participating schools and law enforcement officials have found the SRO program successful in helping reduce school violence, improve school-law enforcement collaboration, and improve perceptions and relations between students and law enforcement.

For more information, contact
National Association of School
Resource Officers
P.O. Box 3379
Sarasota, Florida 34230-3379

or call
Lt. Bill Balkwill
NASRO President
941-951-5010

Jim Corbin
NASRO Director of Training
407-851-5058

- Court judges and probation officers (legal ramifications of violence)
- Parks and recreation department representatives (constructive activities as alternatives to violence)
- Staff of state departments of education, health, and human resources (technical assistance, materials, financial assistance)

Each organization can identify one or more key contact persons that school staff can call to discuss collaborative strategies or to work together on behalf of a particular student. These collaborative relationships might net the following results:

- A resource guide of educational, social, and community-based services for students and their families
- Placements for student service and service-learning projects
- Guidelines for the hiring, training, pay, and employment of school security guards
- Summer activities for youth
- Creation of a task force to design a comprehensive plan of action for reducing gang activity in the community
- Linkages to early childhood education programs so that the message of nonviolent behavior is initiated at the beginning and reinforced throughout a student's school career

(California State DOE, 1989; Gaustad, 1991; Governor's Task Force, 1979; Kean, 1981; Prophet, 1990)

Involving the Community

Violence is everyone's problem, and every member of the community must be enlisted to reinforce lessons learned at school, help with activities that promote family and neighborhood unity, alert officials when there is a potential for violence, and work to reduce violence in the community as well as the school.

Recruiting community support for violence prevention efforts and other school activities can be difficult. Often, communities that are most affected by crime have enough difficulty dealing with neighborhood problems, let alone problems in the school (Menacker, Weldon, & Hurwitz, 1990). Another obstacle to garnering support is that a school suffering from crime and violence problems may also have a poor reputation in the community. In addition, since less than one-third of adults have school-aged children, many community residents have little interest in school affairs.

Table 11

Suggestions for Promoting and Making Use of Community Support

- Solicit advice from community residents on addressing school problems they identify.
- Invite community members to visit the school and discover ways to become involved.
- Develop a resource file of influential community residents–movers and shakers–who are known for their ability to shape public opinion; keep them informed about all school activities and projects.
- Include a representative from the community on the safe school committee; encourage a sense of "our" school, not "their" school, in community residents.
- Use the attention that school crime and violence receive to pressure local politicians and police forces to focus more efforts on the areas in which schools are located.
- Kick off community activities for violence prevention during America's Safe Schools Week, which is the third week in October.
- Ask news organizations to cover school safety activities and to emphasize school and community efforts to reduce violence. Publicize violence prevention efforts through public service announcements, educational video programs, appearances on local news shows, posters, brochures, and other print materials.
- Develop a school safety fact sheet that is updated and distributed on a regular basis; include numbers and types of incidents, discipline actions taken, vandalism, and repair costs.
- Set up school information booths at local community events.
- Publish a principal newsletter, and distribute it widely. Include information about school and community efforts to reduce violence as well as general information about school activities.
- Ask businesses to allow employees time off to volunteer at schools or participate in school activities. Promote adopt-a-school programs by local businesses.
- Encourage community organizations to use the school in the evenings and on weekends.
- Ask church leaders and clergy to help with violence prevention efforts at the school and with efforts to involve the community.
- Invite local government officials to school events.
- Encourage adults in the neighborhood to create and lead after-school youth clubs, community athletic teams, and other recreational programs.
- Recruit volunteer mentors and tutors from local colleges, universities, and businesses.
- Ask community residents to volunteer their homes as "safe houses" where children can go if they are threatened while walking to and from school or waiting at the bus stop. These homes can have signs in their windows designating them as safe houses; screen volunteers closely before including them in the program.
- Request that residents near the school take part in a nighttime school watch program and report any unusual activity at the school to the police.
- Honor a citizen-of-the-week at the school.

(California State DOE, 1989; Ciminillo, 1980; Greenbaum, Gonzalez, & Ackley, 1989; Menacker et al., 1990; NSSC, 1990a, 1990b)

Communities and schools need to work together for their mutual benefit. Health, mental health, service, and business organizations can and do come in regular contact with students; information and resource sharing can play an integral role in violence prevention. Many states are finding success in prevention efforts through full-service schools, in which other service providers are actually located at the school site. Such arrangements can also include professionals whose work is related to violence prevention, intervention, or recovery. Table 11 recommends a variety of strategies to involve the community in violence reduction efforts. ●

Chapter 3

Crisis Management and Intervention Strategies

Violent incidents can range from a fight between two students to a slaying by an armed intruder. While the latter event may seem a remote possibility to many administrators, such incidents can occur anywhere. Schools must be prepared to deal with these and other types of crisis through the development of crisis management plans. Schools that are prepared for major incidents will also be better able to handle more common disruptions or related crises such as the suicide or accidental death of a student. Intervention strategies also help defuse situations from reaching the crisis stage and assist students at risk of violent behavior.

Creating a Crisis Management Plan

Every school should design its own individual plan of action for a crisis. District and state administrators can supply principals with general suggestions for procedures, but plans must be tailored to a school's available staff, building design, student populations, and other factors. The most effective plans are designed by the school safety committee as well as representatives from the school district office, law enforcement, and health services.

In preparing for a violent incident, the school safety committee should identify all necessary tasks for handling the incident and assign staff members—and backups—to be responsible for each task. Such tasks may include the following:

- Informing the district office
- Accompanying injured students to hospitals
- Maintaining order and calm on the campus
- Coordinating transportation
- Coordinating communication among the school, parents, and the media
- Identifying injured or killed students and adults
- Notifying parents and spouses

(NSSC, 1990a)

> A clear, well-organized plan may mean the difference between level-headed actions and solutions or danger and panic.
>
> S. Greenbaum, B., Gonzalez, & N. Ackley, *Educated Public Relations School Safety 101*, 1989

The committee should take into consideration all possible crises when deciding what tasks may need to be addressed. The principal will most likely assume authority in a crisis situation, but someone should be designated to fill this role in the principal's absence. All staff should be informed of this chain of authority (Ciminillo, 1980).

Once a crisis management plan is developed, school staff (all full- and part-time employees including bus drivers and regular substitute teachers) should be given training in the procedures and their responsibilities. Training in and practice of the crisis management plan are especially important because of the human tendency to panic in an emergency. The training should include information on how to recognize and antici-

Table 12

Responding to a Violent Incident

- Assess the situation. How serious is it? What elements of the school's crisis management plan apply? Assemble all necessary school staff members.
- Depending on the incident, either defuse the situation or call school security and/or police officers for assistance. If long-term involvement of law enforcement is necessary, provide space and equipment for a "command post."
- Alert school staff to the situation, and let teachers know what they should do with their classes (e.g., lock classroom doors or leave the building). Also, make sure that teachers account for all their students.
- Separate victims from perpetrators as quickly as possible, and identify all those involved.
- Call for medical assistance if necessary, and assign a staff person to the hospital where students are to be taken.
- Assign a staff member to remain with victims while medical and/or emotional assistance are being obtained.
- Record the names of witnesses, and encourage them to cooperate with the investigation if one is necessary.
- Disperse onlookers, and update students and staff on the situation as soon as possible.
- Notify parents of involved students and spouses of involved school employees if appropriate.
- Prepare to communicate with other parents, concerned community members, and the media.
- Develop and follow procedures for reuniting parents with their children in the event of a critical incident.
- Develop and follow procedures for withdrawing security and/or law enforcement personnel after the incident is over.
- Inform the appropriate school district official of the situation; he or she should notify relevant district personnel and other schools in the area if necessary.
- Prepare a detailed report of the incident for school and district records.

(Blauvelt, 1981; Blount, 1986; Dade County Public Schools, 1988; Fulton County School System, 1991; Gaustad, 1991)

pate violent incidents and how to report them. Students should be taught crisis management and have an opportunity to practice emergency procedures. For example, schools can hold drills during which teachers secure all doors and windows and keep all students in the classroom (Speck, 1992). Any crisis management plan should be reviewed and updated periodically to train new staff and reflect changes in school, district, law enforcement, and media procedures. A list of who is responsible for what during a crisis and important telephone numbers should be posted in the front office and given to staff. A copy of this list should also be sent to the district office, and changes in responsibilities need to be updated and disseminated in a timely manner.

Guidelines for responding to a violent incident (Table 12) have been compiled from the plans of a number of school districts. They are presented in a logical order, but each incident requires its own priorities, and tasks can happen simultaneously as various staff members take on their assigned roles.

While a critical incident such as a homicide or hostage-taking requires immediate intervention by law enforcement, other incidents, such as fights, may be defused without the help of police. Such determinations must often be made under difficult conditions; students may be armed or trained in martial arts, and intervening may place a school official in a perilous position. Police should always be notified if the incident is a criminal act. If an incident is a simple discipline infraction, the response may fall entirely within the scope of the school. In the case of crime, it becomes the responsibility of police and the courts.

If a weapon has been reported in someone's possession or on school grounds, administrators can check various "hiding places" in and around the school building and assign staff to remain highly visible until the weapon is found (Blauvelt, 1981). Searches of suspected students' lockers and/or belongings are also allowable if there are reasonable grounds for suspicion (Rapp, Carrington, & Nicholson, 1992). Any weapons that are found should be photographed and turned over to the police, not kept in the school (Blauvelt, 1981). Most states stipulate that searches of students' lockers,

Table 13
Procedures for Stopping a Fight

- If a teacher in a classroom is informed that there is a fight, he or she should inform the office via intercom or send a reliable student to the office to summon assistance.
- When in sight of the altercation, speak loudly and let everyone know that the behavior is to stop immediately.
- If possible, obtain help from other teachers.
- Call out to any of the students you recognize, and start giving orders. Attempt to get students away from the commotion as quickly as possible.
- If you know the fighting students by name, call out each of their names to let them know they have been identified.
- If confronted with a serious fight, especially one that involves weapons, get additional help; do not try to be a hero.
- If you decide to and are successful in separating the students, try to avoid using confrontational behavior yourself (i.e., do not point at the students, make accusations, or corner them with their backs against the wall).
- Remember that no one can "cool down" instantly; give the students time to talk in a calm setting, and gradually reduce the tension of the situation.

(Blauvelt, 1981; Greenbaum, Turner, Stephens, 1989)

bookbags, purses, pockets, outer clothing, and automobiles are permissible with reasonable cause, provided the searches are conducted by the least intrusive method.

Using Reasonable Force

The possibility of violence between students brings up the issue of reasonable force on the part of school and law enforcement personnel. Teachers, administrators, and staff members have been injured trying to stop fights, and students have sued school districts for injuries received from school personnel trying to stop the students' disruptive behavior or for injuries received because school authorities failed to protect them. One definition of reasonable force may simply be the minimum force necessary to bring a student into compliance with the school conduct code.

Frisby & Beckham (1993) have developed a continuum of force model (see Table 14) in which the increments of disruption or resistance to authority are met with corresponding response levels from authorities. This and other such models usually have their basis in law enforcement rather than school applications and should be modified to meet school needs. The model specifically addresses responses to school violence. School districts should establish standards for reasonable force in consultation with their attorneys to head off possible legal repercussions. Whatever standards are adopted—and standards should be adopted—teachers, administrators, bus drivers, and other school personnel need to receive information and training on the standard's application and limits.

Establishing communication fast and effective communication among school personnel can be critical during a crisis. An intercom system linked to all classrooms is probably the most common means of communication during an emergency. While intercoms are standard in most schools today, teachers who are located in portable buildings or whose classes are held outside may need to be contacted personally. To avoid unnecessarily alarming the students, teachers and administrators might agree on a code phrase, to be announced over the intercom, to signal that teachers should take emergency precautions. Walkie-talkies and a bullhorn are also useful communication tools (Gaustad, 1991).

Students

Sharing the facts with students is especially important during a crisis in order to keep them calm and to discourage rumors (Fulton County School System, 1991). Students should be regularly updated on events and given clear instructions on what to do until the crisis is over. Depending on the circumstances, it may not be appropriate or ethical to divulge the names of students or staff involved in the crisis, but students should be informed about what the school is doing to respond to the situation. Giving teachers more information than students can be counter-productive, as some teachers may let information slip to students and inadvertently start rumors that can worsen a situation. The best approach is to give the same basic information to everyone.

Faculty and Staff

Since teachers are the most direct link to students, it is vital that they know what is happening. If they all have the same information, they can reassure students and squelch unfounded rumors. Therefore, an early morning or late afternoon faculty meeting should be held in

the immediate aftermath of a crisis to bring teachers and staff up-to-date on what has happened and how the school has responded. This meeting should include the principal and perhaps the district superintendent. If it is not possible to arrange such a meeting, a memo may be circulated to all teachers and staff members that describes what has occurred and how the school is responding.

Parents

Schools should establish procedures for communicating with parents during and after a crisis. No matter what the incident, the parents of students who were involved must be contacted immediately. Depending on the severity of the situation, school and district staff may be enlisted to contact all parents individually to pick up their children at school. A plan along these lines must be formulated, or hundreds of parents can converge on an already chaotic situation. Another option is to dismiss students in the usual manner, using buses for transportation, and to send home a written statement, which explains the events that took place at school and the actions taken. Once word gets out to parents and other concerned community residents, they will seek additional information by calling the school or district offices. Staff receiving such calls need a written statement of information to share and should practice handling such calls (Fulton County School System, 1991).

Outside Resources

Proper communication is also important with intervention agencies and services such as law enforcement; hospitals; medical emergency, mental health, and social services; and other community support groups. The school safety committee should contact these services in advance of a crisis to verify the correct phone number, appropriate contact person, and proper procedures to take in an emergency (Gaustad, 1991). A list of intervention services should be posted in the main office. The National School Safety Center (1990a) further recommends keeping an unlisted telephone line available at all times for official use and a portable telephone in the office in case phone lines are disabled.

Working with the Media

The school safety committee should assign at least one staff person to work with the media during a serious crisis. Table 15 offers suggestions for communicating with the media. The principal or a district-level administrator may act as the official spokesperson for the school in a crisis situation, but another staff member

Table 14

School Force Continuum Matrix

A Guide for the Immediate Management of Student Disruption in an Educational Context

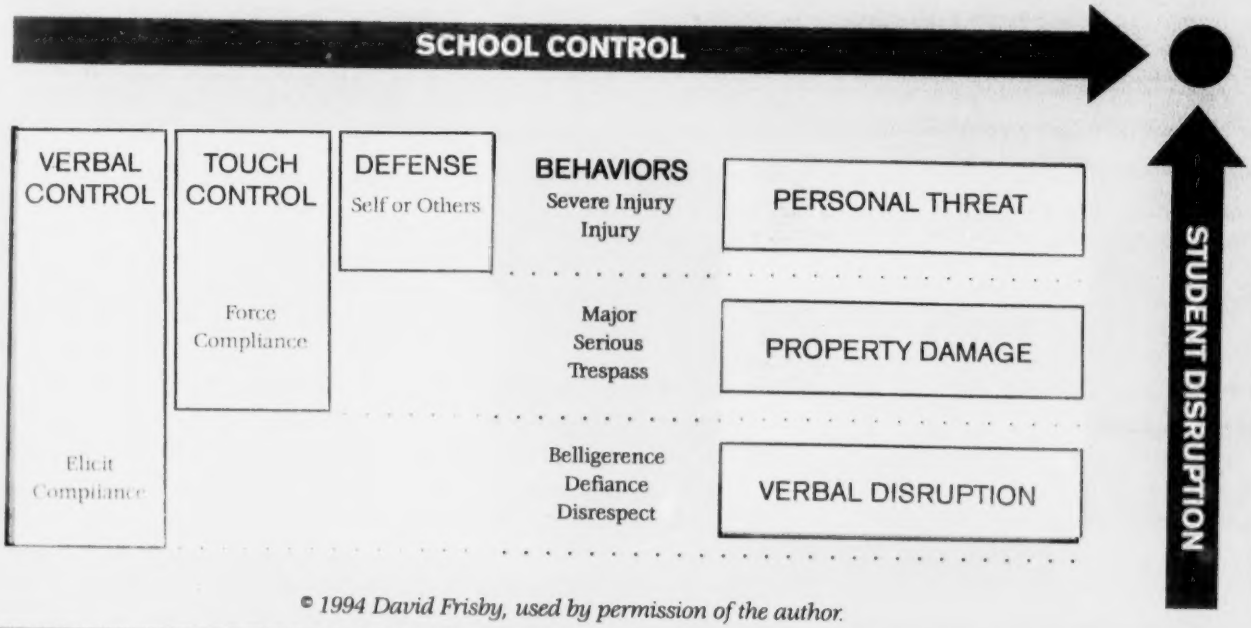

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Table 15
Working with Media During a Crisis

Tips for the School Spokesperson

- Ensure all media inquiries are routed to one person or office.
- Prepare an official statement about the particular crisis and the actions being taken. Include information to answer basic who, what, when, where, why, and how questions, but do not reveal names of students or employees involved in the incident. Read from or distribute this statement when media inquiries are made. This same statement should be shared with teachers, staff, and students to ensure that they are given accurate, consistent information.
- Be brief. Avoid providing superfluous information or using professional jargon.
- Anticipate media questions, especially for potentially controversial issues.
- Answer one question at a time, and answer only the question that is asked.
- As official spokesperson, do not hesitate to say, "I don't know" or "I will have to get back with you" to a reporter's question. A reply of "no comment" suggests that information is being withheld. Remember to follow up when information is available. Bear in mind that the public has a right to know and understand what has happened.
- Try not to appear to be concerned mainly about the school's reputation.
- Ignore abrasive comments made by reporters and maintain a professional attitude.
- Do not treat anything as "off the record."
- Provide updates to the media as events unfold, even (and especially) after the initial crisis is handled.
- Establish time, length, and place of press conference so as to minimize conflict with print deadlines.
- Keep calm. Show sensitivity to the seriousness of the matter, but do not overreact.
- Invite the media to return after the crisis has passed and corrective measures have been taken. This reveals a commitment to long-term solutions and shows that the crisis the media has reported is not the typical situation at the school.

(Fulton County School System, 1991; Gaustad, 1991; Greenbaum Gonzalez, & Ackley, 1989; NSSC, 1990a)

can assume responsibility for organizing the details. In preparation for dealing with the media, this person should become familiar with the reporter who typically covers school news or who receives news releases from the school district (Greenbaum, Gonzalez, & Ackley, 1989). Staff should act as "media lookouts" during a crisis in order to greet reporters and direct them to the school's official spokesperson (Fulton County School System, 1991). If a news conference will be held, reporters can be taken directly to a designated room (see Table 15). The school's representative can also learn how the media may be of help to the school (by publicizing an information hot line number, for example).

Teachers are the most direct link to students. It is vital that they be kept informed in the event of a crisis.

Aiding Victim Recovery

All school staff should be educated about the emotional needs of victims of violence. Gaustad (1991) warns, "Insensitive and unsympathetic reactions by administrators and coworkers can compound the emotional trauma of the attack and lengthen the recovery process" (40). Asking victims to fill out confusing forms, wait in an office alone, or meet with the perpetrator can heighten their sense of fear and make them feel doubly victimized. As suggested earlier, a staff member should be assigned to attend to victims during a crisis; this person may also help victims obtain the support services they need. It is particularly important that the school assign an advocate for the victims(s) of sexual assault. The victim advocate should be of the same sex as the victim, be able to explain to the victim his or her rights, and assist the victim through administrative and criminal proceedings. In addition, the school district should provide written guidelines and information to victims regarding the reporting of crimes, available medical and psychological services, victims' rights, and the procedures for dealing with the violation (*Guidelines for Policies Addressing Sexual Misconduct Toward Students in Public Schools*, 1992).

While the primary victims of school violence should rightly receive the most immediate attention to their physical and emotional needs, victims of violence encompass many more people than those who are actually injured or involved in an incident. Witnesses to the event as well as parents, spouses, friends, and teachers of injured or killed students and staff are also affected. While a school cannot be expected to provide long-term

individual counseling to all those who may need it, resuming normal functioning after a crisis may require that medical, psychological, and nurturing services be available to students, faculty, and staff. Such services not only assist in the recovery process, but they also help prevent angry students from retaliating with further violence (CDC, 1992; Gaustad, 1991).

It is vital that the school or school district assign an advocate to help the victim of a sexual assault.

Mental health experts recommend that school administrators "take a long-term view of dealing with a crisis" because psychological symptoms resulting from a traumatic event may not surface until weeks or months after the incident (NSSC, 1990a, p. 16). As part of the crisis management plan, the school safety committee should identify mental health professionals who can be called during and after a crisis to work with students, parents, and school staff. These health professionals may also be willing to conduct workshops with staff to help prepare for a crisis situation. The district may also want to establish a team of professionals who can be convened and sent to any school in the district to help with crisis recovery (NSSC, 1990c). Many schools that have been through a traumatic crisis found it beneficial to reopen the day after the crisis, even on weekends, and provide counseling and information for several days. Schools may want to provide ongoing counseling sessions for students.

Because the trauma of witnessing a violent act can interfere with the grief process, student bystanders should be encouraged to talk about their feelings of loss and their thoughts about anger, injury, racial issues (if applicable), and/or death. Students are often confused and frightened after a crisis, and they may depend on adults to help them cope with their feelings about the incident and understand why it occurred. Teachers should, therefore, encourage discussions during class about students' feelings of sadness or anger. They should also monitor students' behavior and refer especially troubled students to counselors (Gaustad, 1991).

School faculty and staff may experience delayed psychological effects of their own when the crisis is over. Their needs should be anticipated and support services provided at this time. Childrens' reactions are often influenced by those of teachers and other adults, so it is especially important that faculty and staff receive the counseling they need to more effectively help students.

When teachers are victimized, they may require special counseling to avoid blaming themselves, viewing the incident as a professional failure, or becoming emotionally crippled by the event and unable to continue teaching. Because an attack on one teacher can erode the sense of security of others, a teacher's co-workers may also need to be reassured of the safety of the school/classroom. In extreme cases, district officials may be asked to transfer some teachers to new schools or work settings or retrain staff members who wish to change jobs (NSSC, 1990a). Assistance with legal, medical, Workers' Compensation, and other post-incident procedures is usually well-received by victims.

Reporting Violent Incidents

Writing up a detailed report of a major incident or crisis at a school is the final step in a crisis management plan. Reports should also be filed on any violent, criminal, or major disruptive incident on campus. South Carolina law requires schools to report every crime committed on campus. The state of New York stipulates that all school personnel must report any violence and has developed a telephone hotline for students and staff to report illegal activities.

Some teachers and administrators downplay incidents of violence in their schools; they may fear copycat behavior, bad publicity, being blamed or possibly sued, suffering retaliation from the offender, or having the incident blown out of proportion. Incidents may go unreported because administrators feel the incidents do not represent a serious problem, prefer to rely on their own security and discipline, wish to downplay the incident, or suspect the police and courts will not be particularly helpful (Rapp et al., 1992). However, acknowledging crime and reporting it accurately are crucial to understanding the extent of the problem and what is required to address it.

Incident reporting can answer many of the following questions:

- What kinds of crimes (or violent behavior) are reported and in what frequency?
- Where and when do crimes (or violent behavior) occur on campus?
- What types of persons commit school crimes (or violence)?

- What are the characteristics of the students who are chronic offenders?
- What types of persons are the most likely victims of school crime or violence?
- Is campus crime (or violence) a reflection of gang activity?

(California State DOE, 1989, p. 21)

Answers to these questions are essential to a quality needs assessment for a school and can help the safety committee make informed decisions about what needs to be changed. Information collected is useful only if there is uniform and consistent reporting by staff within a school and across schools. Uniformity is important in the types of incidents reported, the categories and definitions used to report incidents, and the information gathered on the incident, such as location and persons involved. Information on incidents is only as good as the reporting process. The importance of reporting needs to be emphasized, and training must be carried out on procedures and definitions.

One important element is the incident reporting form. Appendix B contains an example of a school reporting form. An effective form is designed to get answers to the following questions:

- How did you respond to the complaint?
- What happened?
- Why did it happen?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Who was involved?

(Blauvelt, 1981, p. 2)

Students who are victims of crime may be eligible for victim assistance funds. Check with your local victim assistance/ compensation program. Such programs may also serve as an alternative source of funding.

When developing or implementing an incident reporting system, administrators should consider the following issues:

- How will reports be filed?
- Who will see these reports outside of the school?
- Should someone be assigned to review each report before it is filed?
- Will weekly or monthly summary reports be prepared? If so, who will receive these reports, and how will the information be used?
- Who will analyze data from the reports on a regular basis, and how will this information be disseminated and used?

(Blauvelt, 1992)

In districts where gangs are a serious problem, a specialized incident reporting system can focus on the gang influence in schools. Portland, Oregon's computerized gang tracking system, for example, provides information on gang members' real names and nicknames, associates, vehicles, weapons, gang-associated clothing, colors, hand signs, insignia, criminal activities, and more. The information is available only to school administrators and law enforcement officials (Prophet, 1990).

Violent incidents and their aftermath sometimes require interagency reporting. Interagency agreements that outline the specific responsibilities of each agency for reporting can be prepared. The following suggestions may guide reporting procedures between agencies:

- School officials should report to law enforcement any violent or criminal activities on campus, including detained trespassers, possible gang situations, and searches that may involve felonies.
- Law enforcement should report to schools any students arrested off campus for criminal behavior.
- Courts and probation officers should report to schools any adjudicated juveniles with probationary or disciplinary requirements involving school attendance.
- Schools should report to courts and probation officers any incidents of truancy for students with probationary or disciplinary requirements involving school attendance.
- Courts should report to schools any students judged guilty of violent acts.
- Schools should report to teachers and clients any students with violent tendencies.
- School districts should report to other districts to which students with violent tendencies or disciplinary problems are transferring.
- Schools should report to parents any reasons for disciplinary action against a student, including corporal punishment, suspension, or expulsion.

Helping Students Recover

After one of its students was murdered during a robbery, the faculty and students of Cody High School in Detroit, Michigan, used a number of approaches to help cope with their feelings of grief, loss, and fear. On the day following the incident, the school designated and publicized a classroom for anyone "who wanted to talk, to remember, to express their feelings." They staffed the room with teachers, a school social worker, two psychologists, and a minister and allowed students to come and go throughout the day. Follow-up meetings, which students helped plan, resulted in a neighborhood march to protest violence and the planting and dedication of memorial trees in front of the school. The faculty also invited motivational speakers to talk with students about ways to reduce the violence in their community (May, 1992, p. 10A).

For more information, contact
Cody High School
18445 Cathedral
Detroit, MI 48228
313-866-9200

Discipline and Intervention Strategies

When a student violates the conduct code, schools must apply appropriate disciplinary strategies. In the event.of a serious act of violence, a student must also face criminal charges, but in most cases the school has to decide on the consequences for the offense. When planning a discipline or intervention strategy for a violent student, be sure to review the student's record and/or meet with the youth's family to obtain medical, psychological, and social background information. The following subsection discusses the advantages and limitations of discipline and intervention options that schools have used with violent students.

Removing the Student: Dealing with Serious Violent Incidents

Out-of-School Suspension

Schools have a right and a responsibility to remove students whose behavior presents a danger to others. Out-of-school suspension (OSS) is a common form of discipline because it removes the violent student from the school, is easy to administer, requires little planning or resources, and can be applied for a number of infractions (U.S. Department of Justice, 1986). There is no question that OSS is the appropriate school response to many serious violent incidents. But while OSS is often a necessary step, other times it is more of a convenient one. The school's solution may create a larger community problem by placing dangerous youth on the streets. In addition, OSS is primarily a "quick fix" to the problem and has little chance of preventing future problems at the school if it is not coupled with long-term preventive and rehabilitative strategies.

> School systems that do not report existing dangers place both students and staff at risk by giving them a false sense of security.
>
> J. Gaustad, *Schools Respond to Gangs and Violence*, 1991

District and state records indicate that the number of suspensions varies greatly among schools and districts. This disparity exists even among schools and districts with similar socioeconomic populations, suggesting that some places are better than others at devising alternatives to OSS. Research has shown that OSS has no demonstrated positive effect on disruptive behavior (Comerford & Jacobson, 1987), and Wheelock (1986) charges that suspension is perhaps the most powerful message of rejection there is in contributing to student disengagement from school. Other disadvantages of OSS are as follows:

- Suspended students are often the most in need of direct instruction and often fail required courses as a result of being suspended.
- High school dropouts are twice as likely to have been suspended as non-dropouts.
- Suspended students may regard suspension as a vacation or reward.
- Removing students from schools may contribute to delinquency, as many suspended students are left unsupervised.

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- Minority students are suspended or expelled in disproportionately high numbers.

(Hodgkinson, 1993; Silva, 1992; *Task Force on School Discipline*, 1990; U.S. Department of Justice, 1986; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986)

During a four-month period in 1992, 64 percent of juveniles arrested by the Duval County, Florida, (Jacksonville) Sheriff's Office had committed their crimes while suspended from school.

S. Fish, *Students on the Outs May Stay In*, 1993

Table 16 lists strategies for reducing expulsions and out-of-school suspensions, particularly for at-risk or disadvantaged students.

In-School Suspension

In-School Suspension (ISS) temporarily relieves the teacher of disruption and denies the student participation in extracurricular activities. ISS also enables the school to offer students services, such as academic tutoring and personal or group counseling, that may help prevent future problems. After-school detention and Saturday school, variations on ISS, have similar designs and purposes.

ISS has become popular with many schools and is generally designed as an alternative or at least an intervention before out-of-school suspension. It is unclear, however, whether ISS is consistently being used in this way. The Florida Task Force on School Discipline found in a study in 1989, that ISS was not replacing OSS. Instead, in many schools, "in-school suspension is often used instead of other in-school interventions like corporal punishment, after-school detention, and parent conferences, and not as an alternative to OSS" (*Task Force on School Discipline*, 1990, p. 45). In a more recent study at 20 school sites, administrators at schools visited claimed that in-school suspension was being used as an alternative to out-of-school suspension as a part of a disciplinary continuum (Florida DOE, 1995).

If ISS is to truly serve as a replacement to sending students home, then planning, counseling, consistency, positive reinforcement, rehabilitation, and follow-up must be included. If ISS consists of merely placing problem students in a room all day and forbidding them to speak, it will be no more successful than sending students home. Although it can be an effective alternative to OSS, in-school suspension requires additional staff time, school space, and planning, and may not be appropriate for all students.

Expulsion

The last resort for schools, expulsion should be reserved for the most serious offenses and threatening situations. Rules regarding expulsion should be explained to all at the school and applied fairly. As with suspension, however, some districts exercise this option far more than others, and some expel disproportionately high numbers of minority students (Florida DOE, 1995; Silva, 1992). Schools and districts can request comparison data on expulsion rates in their states (from district or state department of education offices) to see if their expulsion practices and rates are within state norms.

Many districts have no special programs for expelled students, who are simply turned out into the street to become the responsibility of law enforcement. Unfortunately, there are not enough community-sponsored programs for disruptive and/or disturbed youth. Again, punishment without attempting to address the source of the problem succeeds only in moving the problem elsewhere. Some districts have instituted alternative schools for their most disruptive and dangerous students. Dade County, Florida, has developed recommendations for a "work back" program in which the expelled student attends an alternative school on the way to completing requirements for returning to their home school. This approach provides specialized assistance for expelled and other problem students and relieves a burden from "regular" schools.

Statistics show that crime by and against juveniles peaks at 3:00PM and again at 6:00PM.

U.S. Justice Department, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims. A National Report*, 1995

Districts may choose to have a clinical psychologist conduct evaluations of students who are considered a present danger to others. A written diagnosis from this authority can buttress a school's effort to have such students separated from others and given help and education on an individual basis.

Alternatives to Suspension: Dealing with Less Serious Incidents

Most schools seek alternatives to suspension when violent incidents are not severe enough to warrant removing the student. Described below, the most successful of these approaches often focus on building self-esteem

Table 16

Suggestions for Reducing Suspensions and Expulsions, Particularly for Disadvantaged Students

- Encourage teachers and administrators to get to know the communities from which their students come and recognize the cultural values that students bring to school. Where possible, involve parents as partners in reducing violent behavior.
- Schools or districts with disproportionately high suspension rates for minority students must recognize that there is a problem. Plans and goals for addressing this disparity should be written into school and district safety plans.
- In interpreting the severity of a student's offense (finding out what happened, who was responsible, what the response will be, whether or not the student can be believed), consistency is paramount.
- The fallacy that students' behavior can be connected to the color of their skin must be discarded. Correlations of students who are suspended or expelled with factors such as GPA, test scores, or socioeconomic level are far greater predictors of student trouble than race.
- Do not equate being "strict" with dealing with the overall problem of student violence; focus more effort on prevention than on punishment.
- Train administrators and teachers in such topics as handling a violent incident, conflict resolution, and crowd control.
- Make every effort to have the staff and administrators of the school match the diversity of the student body. Minority students need role models at all levels in the school.
- Ensure that the school safety committee reflects the cultural diversity of the school. Teachers and an ethnically representative group of students should have a substantive voice in developing conduct codes.
- Educate administrators and teachers to better appreciate the cultures of their students. This training should focus on specific cultures represented in the school and not just address the general category of multicultural education.
- Keep in mind the fundamental rule that students who are engaged in work that interests them are far less likely to get into trouble than those who are bored or distracted.
- Institute violence prevention programs for students that are culturally and developmentally appropriate. These programs should be designed for different stages of adolescent development and feature peer instruction and counseling.
- Make violence prevention programs interdisciplinary and multi-institutional.

and having students assume responsibility for the school and community.

Service Assignments

Many schools give students an option of performing supervised assignments on school grounds in lieu of out-of-school suspension. Both the student and his or her parents must agree to this arrangement, and students must not be allowed to do potentially hazardous projects (such as working with heavy machinery). Service assignments can bring about significant benefits to all involved when handled properly. On an immediate level, they can save some students from the automatic failure which would result from missing several days of classes due to suspension. The students would work only during their elective class periods or before and after school. (Making students work through all their classes sends the wrong message: it tells students that the school is more interested in getting free labor than educating.)

In addition, students can be given assignments that offer them some responsibility and opportunities for success. Assignments of this type may involve

- Serving as hall monitors
- Working in the office
- Removing graffiti
- Helping with landscaping, painting, or restoration work
- Tutoring younger students
- Collecting and processing recycled materials
- Working in the library or media lab
- Collecting information on the history of the town or school
- Helping set up for assemblies

Alternative Education Program

Central School, Greenwood, South Carolina's Alternative Educational Program, was designed for students who have difficulty in a regular school environment (some of whom have a potential for violence). The program, for ninth and tenth graders, combines regular-style classes with activities and counseling designed to meet the students' special needs and increase their opportunities for success.

Students are referred to the program by district guidance counselors or principals. Once referred, the students and the parents participate in a screening interview, and the students are then selected on the basis of their ability to perform in the program and their need for an alternative educational plan. The school serves 75 students who may earn six units toward graduation for each year they participate in the program.

A staff of six runs the school, four of whom are full-time. A counselor helps with students' personal problems as well as with transitions from home to school, alternative school to regular school, and school to employment. A partnership with a local church provides additional books, tutors, presentations, and activities. One positive result of the program was a dramatic reduction in failure and dropout rates; in 1991-92, of participating ninth and tenth graders, only three students failed, and only eight dropped out of school.

For more information, contact
Central School
P.O. Box 248
Greenwood, SC 29648
803-223-4348, ext. 273

Alternative School Instead of Jail

The Juvenile Justice Classroom Program in New York City was a highly successful program through which youthful offenders were given an alternative to going to jail: they could enroll in a special program offered at West Side High School. The program, called Developing Opprtunities through Meaningful Education (DOME), required daily attendance and good behavior. If the students (all of whom had been convicted of serious crimes) broke the rules, they risked being sent to jail for their crimes.

DOME students attended group and individual counseling sessions in addition to regular classes. They also participated in tightly structured enrichment and after-school activities to keep busy and productive. About 80 percent of participating students stayed out of futher trouble. In 1991, only six of the school's 123 students were sent back to the courts.

The program cost only one one-hundredth of what it would have cost to incarcerate the same students, saving the city $10 million in its first year (*ABC World News Tonight*, "America Agenda," July 1, 1992).

For more information, contact
The DOME Project, Inc.
486 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, NY 10024
212-724-1780

- Cleaning up arenas or fields after sporting events
- Researching and reporting on social concerns such as hunger, homelessness, or the elderly

(Watkins & Wilkes, 1993)

During such projects, students must be supervised at all times. Assignments of this type are designed to be challenging and rewarding instead of punitive or humiliating. Students working on these projects are told that they are contributing to their school or community and are praised for their effort. It is important that students not be saddled with drudgery work that will degrade them in front of their peers. The punishment is having the students perform the service, not the service itself. Low self-esteem is a major contributing problem with many violent students; the right kinds of work assignments can give students a chance to be proud of themselves. Staff volunteers can work with the students, cultivate positive relationships with them, and provide informal counseling.

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Alternative Educational Programs

Some students, especially those with a history of disruptive and/or violent behavior, may benefit from removal from the regular school and placement in an alternative educational program. Alternative schools and schools-within-schools emphasize independent study, good conduct, and developing self-discipline and responsibility (see Table 17). Several models exist, including community-centered schools that focus on group cohesiveness, family involvement, and academic and social skills; adjustment schools for habitually disruptive or truant students; and apprenticeship programs that prepare students for employment (NSSC, 1990a; Scrimger & Elder, 1981).

Corporal Punishment

Although corporal punishment has long been used as a discipline strategy, it is not recommended as an alternative to suspension. A large body of research indicates that the disadvantages of hitting children out-weigh any possible benefits. Corporal punishment contributes to the perception that striking another person is acceptable as a problem-solving strategy (CDC, 1992), and it has little, if any, lasting effect on promoting self-discipline (U.S. Department of Justice, 1986). Striking a child as punishment in no way addresses the underlying causes of the child's act and occasionally results in physical injuries for which the school can be held liable.

Although the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that corporal punishment is allowable in schools, many states and districts in other states have banned its use. Thousands of schools around the nation have reduced or are phasing out corporal punishment. Schools trying to reduce violence may have great difficulty justifying the use of corporal punishment as a deterrent to further violence.

Student Assistance Programs

Many schools now utilize student assistance programs, or SAPs, to help students who bring to school problems that interfere with their and other students' learning. Such problem include abuse, neglect, alcohol or other drug use, or other environmental factors that result in poor performance, absence, or disruptive violent behavior. SAPs utilize school-based professionals or a core team (including teachers, counselors, and administrators) that identifies, assesses, and refers the student for treatment and provides follow-up assistance as needed. Families are sometimes included in the referral and assistance process as well. This approach helps identify problems before they worsen, helps students access needed treatment, and frees teachers to teach. ●

Table 17

Characteristics of Effective Alternative Educational Programs for Disruptive Youth

- Selection of program by the student from several options provided by the school district, human services department, probation agency, or the courts
- Clear and consistent goals for students and parents
- Curricula addressing cultural and learning style differences
- High standards and expectations of student performance both academically and behaviorally
- Direct supervision of all activities on a closed campus
- Full-day attendance with a rigorous workload and minimal time off
- Daily attendance and informal progress reports
- Continual monitoring and evaluation and formalized passage from one step or program to another
- A democratic climate
- A motivated and culturally diverse staff
- Counseling for parents and students
- Administrative and community support for the program

(Garrison, 1987, p. 22)

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Chapter 4
Roots of Violence: Risk Factors

Socially disorganized, crime-ridden neighborhoods produce socially disorganized, crime-ridden schools.

J. Menacker, W. Weldon, & E. Hurwitz,
Community Influences on School Crime and Violence, 1990

A variety of societal, familial, individual, and educational factors contribute to violence and aggressive behavior in school. All children and youth in the United States live in a violent society whether or not their own neighborhoods are considered unsafe. Violence permeates our arts, sports, entertainment, literature, and communities. According to the U.S. Department of Justice (Kalish, 1988), the U.S. rate of violent crime is four to nine times higher than rates in Europe, and the U.S. homicide rate is between eight and 20 times higher than that of other developed countries (Fingerhut & Kleinman 1990). Approximately one out of every 18 youths in America is assaulted, robbed, or raped each year (Wetzel, 1988). The situation is not improving; the murder rate among 14- to 17-year-olds increased 165 percent from 1985-1995 (U.S. Department of Justice, 1995).

Such a degree of violence is bound to make its way into schools even when precautions are taken. In fact, many schools deserve praise for making their environments much safer than the neighborhoods in which they are located (Menacker et al., 1990); students who have reason to be fearful in school consistently rate other places in their neighborhood—subways, parks, and streets—as more dangerous (McDermott, 1983).

While full discussion of the roots of violence and aggressive behavior in our society are beyond the scope of this publication, a number of societal ills, such as the accessibility and glamorization of weapons, or the cycle of disadvantage, can be linked directly to violence among youth. This section has been organized into the four domains described in Section 1, but these divisions are somewhat artificial because the roots and causes of violence and aggressive behavior tend to "run into each other" and can come from several domains.

Community Risk Factors

Weapons

Whatever one's position on gun ownership, it is beyond dispute that the United States is a gun-toting society. Half of the households in the United States possess at least one firearm (Wright et al., 1983), and there are approximately 255 million guns in this country (Olinger, 1991). Students can buy guns off the street for as little as $25 or "borrow" them from parents. Students might then carry weapons to school to show off, protect themselves, seek revenge on someone else, or participate in gang- or drug-related activities. Peer pressure is a factor, too; if a youth's friends begin to carry weapons, he or she may also want or feel the need to carry one.

As frightening as all this weapon-carrying may sound, an even greater concern is that many students seem to be unaware or unaffected by the lethal impact of guns. Says Lawton (1991), "Unlike choking a victim or stabbing him with a knife, a cold detachment can reign over the user of a gun" (14). Young people may not make the deadly connection between the assailant, the trigger, the bullet, and the victim.

Ebony Knights: Intervention for Minority Boys

The Ebony Knights, a middle school mentoring group in Apopka, Florida, is working to keep at-risk minority boys on track with activities like poetry and community service. The Ebony Knights is geared toward minority male students ages 11 to 14 with academic or behavioral problems. The program is funded by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. Participants do homework for several hours after school and take part in a group session called a "brothers' conference" where they talk about the school day and develop solutions to problems they encounter.

The group is part performance troupe and part service club. It presents dramatic readings of poems such as "I Am What You Call a Statistic." The program's mentors say the youth apply their enhanced skills in self-discipline to learning the poems, completing their schoolwork, and interacting with others successfully. Participants are taught to be loyal to family and friends and to participate in community service activities (L. Rayam, personal communication, June 23,1992).

For more information, contact
David Peralth
Metropolitan Orlando League
2512 West Colonial Drive
Orlando, FL 32804
407-841-7654

The Cycle of Disadvantage

Schorr (1988) coined the phrase "cycle of disadvantage" to describe the situation in which many young people find themselves when growing up in families and communities with high rates of poverty, teenage pregnancies, unemployment, poor physical health, and/or low levels of education. With increasing homicide rates in many urban communities, it is not surprising that such risk factors suggest to many young people that they have little chance to succeed in the future even if they live to see it.

Some violent students may be acting out in frustration against a society that they perceive as inherently unequal and indifferent to them and their needs. Perry (1987) notes that children who are subjected to repeated frustrations, rejection, and other aversive stimuli over a long period may eventually fear to strike back and come to perceive the world as a hostile place. Also, violence and criminal behavior may serve as a form of recreation for young people who cannot find jobs or more appropriate leisure- time activities.

Research supports the notion that poverty plays a far greater role than race in determining whether a person is likely to engage in violence or become a victim of it. For example, a study examining homicide rates between races found that when the populations were compared by socioeconomic status, no significant difference in homicide rates between races was found (Centerwall, 1984, p. 1813-1815). However, African-American and other minority youth represent a disproportionate fraction of the poor.

According to Akbar (1980), minority youth often lack experience or knowledge in how to respond to their anger constructively, and the result can be violent. This situation may partly explain why, although African-American students represent only one-fourth of the student population nationwide, they make up approximately 40 percent of all suspended and expelled students (Wheelock, 1986). A Boston study found a two-to-one suspension ratio between African-American and white students and that 30 percent of the suspensions involved violent incidents (Boston Commission on Safe Public Schools, 1983). A statewide study in Florida found that across all types of offenses, African-American students were more likely to receive harsher punishment—particularly expulsion—than white students (Florida DOE, 1995).

The wide disparity in suspension rates by race also suggests that many schools may be unprepared to handle the often different needs and learning styles of poor minority youth and that such youth receive harsher punishments. School administrators responsible for enforcing conduct codes walk a fine line when the issues of race, violence, and discipline intersect. As administrators see it, disparities in suspension rates are not based on race but are instead a reflection of a variety of factors including student poverty, lack of parent involvement or role models, unhealthy family environments (which cross all socioeconomic levels), and school efforts to be consistent in applying stringent discipline codes. "We are a strict school," explains a middle school principal whose school has a 53 percent sus-

pension rate (i.e., there was an average of more than one suspension for every two students during the 1990-1991 school year); "we do not put up with children behaving in ways that are inappropriate" (Silva, 1992, p. 4A).

Schools with effective violence prevention programs scrutinize their suspension rates to determine whether some students receive more severe punishment than others. These schools recognize the emotional, socioeconomic, and cultural contexts from which student violence often springs and take steps to reduce the number of suspensions and expulsions meted out to minority students. They also make every effort to have administrators and staff reflect the diversity of the student population. The best way to reduce suspensions is to reduce the rates of violence that lead to suspension in the first place. It is therefore in every school's best interest to find ways to help students find more positive outlets for their anger and frustration.

Hate Crimes

Hate crimes are a direct result of the ignorance, fear, and racism that grow out of various forms of prejudice. In their book, *Hate Crime*, Bodinger-DeUriarte and Sancho (1992) define a hate crime as any act, or attempted act, to cause physical injury, emotional suffering, or property damage through intimidation, harassment, racial/ ethnic slurs and bigoted epithets, vandalism, force, or the threat of force, motivated all or in part by hostility to the victim's real or perceived race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation (10).

The prevalence of hate crimes in this country has not been formally measured, but news reports and data collection by special interest groups support the consensus that hate crimes are on the rise. Young people are participating in or instigating such crimes, in and out of school, in increasing numbers. For example, one-third of Los Angeles County schools experienced incidents of hate crimes in 1989, the majority of which took place at middle schools.

A Florida first-grader was expelled when he brought his parents' gun to school, fired it on the playground, and then threatened to shoot a teacher who tried to take the gun away. The six-year-old, who had loaded the gun himself and fired it through his pant leg so that no one would know he was doing the shooting, was allowed to return to school at the beginning of the next school year after receiving counseling. The child's parents promised to lock up their guns in the future (Holland, 1992).

Hate crime in society can take more subtle forms in the school setting where student interests—such as music, athletics, and fashion—can be as important to one's identity as ethnicity or religion. As one student put it, "You meet in middle school, and you are friends for life—or you are enemies for life" (Fish & Miller, 1991). The plague of hate crimes in society is clearly a factor that increases the incidence of violence in schools.

Media Violence

Another societal factor that seems to influence violence among young people is the prevalence and glamorization of violence in mass media. The National School Safety Center (1990a) notes that stories on television and in movies are based, with disturbing regularity, on the premise that killing is the ultimate problem-solving technique; "even the 'good guys' such as Rambo, Rocky, and Dirty Harry conquer evil through violent means." Police officers have found that the guns featured in popular movies and television shows are often the most fashionable ones for youth to own (Gaustad, 1991).

Television and films also often link violence with sex, which may contribute to the problem of sexual assault and battery. "Slasher" movies such as the "Halloween," "Friday the 13th," and "Nightmare on Elm Street" series typically (and graphically) depict young people, particularly young women, being brutally murdered during or after having sex. Although such films generally carry a "Restricted" rating, underage youth usually have no difficulty getting into theaters or renting the films on videotape—and they do so in great numbers.

The news media also contribute to the problem. By focusing on the most sensational or atypical violent incidents (i.e., sex and race crimes, race-related crimes, gruesome murders, random violence), media give a misleading impression as to the proportion of such crimes. Actually, the majority of violent acts take place between people who know each other and people of the same race; children need to learn about the far more prevalent danger of acquaintance violence (Prothrow-Stith, 1987).

Interdisciplinary Curriculum to Reduce Violence

Violence Prevention: Curriculum for Adolescents is an established program to help adolescents deal with anger in productive, nonviolent ways. First introduced in Boston, the program is now having success, particularly with at-risk students, in schools around the country. The program is designed to teach students alternatives to violence by

- Providing students with information on adolescent violence and homicide
- Presenting anger as a normal, potentially constructive emotion
- Giving students opportunities to discuss potential gains and losses from fighting and alternatives to violence
- Having students analyze situations that lead to violence and practice avoiding fights by engaging them in videotaped role plays
- Creating a classroom ethos that is nonviolent and that values violence prevention behavior

(Prothrow-Stith, 1987)

Violence Prevention is one unit in the Teenage Health Teaching Modules program, which emphasizes the development of self-assessment, communication, decision making, health advocacy, and self-management skills in adolescents.

For more information, contact
Teenage Health Teaching Modules
Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02160
617-969-7100

Does watching thousands of celluloid murders, make children more violent? While no causal relationship has been proven, prolonged exposure to death and violence in the media can have a desensitizing effect on youth. Some youth who are already prone to violence have emulated murders they have seen on film; others do not appear affected at all. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that shows laden with explicit scenes of violence do not help steer children and youth away from violent behaviors.

Sexual Assault/Battery

Increasing attention is being focused on sexual assault and battery of women. Rape is the fastest-growing violent crime in the U.S. (Anderson, 1988), and domestic assaults are the single major cause of injury to women in the United States (Renzetti & Curran, 1989, p. 163). For example, there were 6,969 reported forcible rapes in Florida in 1991. In 44 percent of these rapes, the victims were females age 17 and under (Uniform Crime Reports, 1992). Other evidence underscores the young age at which many women are assaulted. One in four college-age women is a victim of rape or attempted rape after age 14, according to a 1985 national study conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health. Half of the reported incidents occurred before college (Koss, 1992).

One form of sexual battery that has received increasing attention is that of acquaintance rape. In the National Institute of Mental Health survey, offenders in eight out of 10 of the reported rapes were acquaintances of the victim, and "over half (57 percent) of the rapes involved a date" (Koss, 1992, p. 23).

School Risk Factors

The mission of schools is to educate, not to be surrogate parents or police officers for children, and teaching nonviolence to children has not been the school's traditional role. Because of the rising incidence of school violence and calls for schools to do more to prevent them, educators have assumed new roles to deal with the problem. Yet schools find that it is very difficult to provide a setting that is open, non-oppressive, and conducive to learning and at the same time sufficiently secure to prevent campus violence. Mark Karlin, President of the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence, notes that schools are being placed in the impossible position of having to be free of violence when the rest of society is not and achieving this end without resorting to repressive measures (Morganthau et at., 1992).

Lacking training in violence control and often having to be reactive instead of proactive, principals and teach-

ers struggle to find a balance. Sometimes, well-intentioned efforts to deal with students and establish order may actually provoke violent behaviors. In an in-depth study of a Puerto Rican gang in Chicago, Padilla (1992) found that most of the gang members believed that their lifestyle was prompted by events in elementary school that branded them as troublemakers. Gang members described themselves as hyperactive, bored, or slow learners whose teachers viewed them as deviants because of their language, culture, and/or socioeconomic status. Feeling misunderstood and angry, these students chose to "live up" to the label; they also sought friendships with those who were similarly regarded, which ultimately led them to join gangs.

School Policies and Procedures

Schools clearly have the responsibility to assure that every student is offered equal opportunities to learn and that those who have difficulty taking advantage of these opportunities—due to such factors as language barriers, family background, or personal characteristics—are provided the extra attention and support necessary to succeed. Research by Padilla (1992) and others also supports the idea that student labeling and tracking are not the best ways to promote equal opportunity for all students (Kelly & Pink, 1982; Rich, 1981).

The Report of the Task Force on School Discipline (Task Force, 1990) notes that policies governing promotion and academic credits can also contribute to student frustration and perhaps violence. At the elementary and middle school levels, students are often required to repeat not only courses they have failed but also those they passed. In some junior high and high schools, students who pass the first semester of a course but then fail it in the second semester have to take the whole course over again. In many cases, a student suspended for ten days automatically fails all of his or her classes and has to take them again regardless of his or her academic standing. Student embarrassment, frustration, and anger at such policies can lead to further insubordination, non-compliance, and violence.

The Report of the Task Force on School Discipline also identifies the top five secondary-school policies that *students* say contribute to misconduct:

- Closed campuses
- Prohibition of student smoking while staff are allowed to smoke
- Extreme shortness of time between classes
- Attention (some students suggest obsession) given to dress codes and their enforcement
- "Dressing out" requirements for physical education

(*Task Force*, 1990, pp. 2-3)

Noting that these policies have led to a "significant number" of suspensions at some schools, the authors of the report suggest that schools, students, and parents reconsider policies in these areas.

Uneven Enforcement of Policies

A failure to enforce rules or call in law enforcement can also exacerbate school violence. To illustrate, a study of the Chicago public schools' discipline procedures found that police were called in for only 6.5 percent of 106 criminal acts—including aggravated assault, weapons possession, and sexual assault—and that, in every instance, students received less than the *minimum* required days of suspension for the crimes committed (Menacker et al., 1990). Such policies may suggest to students that school is the *best* place to commit a crime because they can expect to get away with it. When school discipline policies are lax, students who feel they must protect themselves are more likely to bring weapons to school (Rapp et al., 1992).

> It is all too easy for parents to drop their children off in kindergarten, pick them up in the 12th grade, and then wonder what went wrong in between.
>
> D.R. Grossnickle & R.D. Stephens, *Developing Personal and Social Responsibility*, 1992

Another school-related factor which may contribute to violence is school and class size. Overcrowding in schools leads to uncomfortable population densities that some students find threatening, feelings of anonymity among students, more physical contact in closed spaces, and less control over false rumors about students and staff, all of which can lead to increased violence (Kean, 1981; "Truth Combats School Violence," 1992).

A final school characteristic that is a contributing factor to violence is the number of students enrolled in school who do not wish to be there. Some researchers (Doyle, 1978; Newman, 1980; Toby, 1983) postulate that school violence is less prevalent in high schools than middle schools because many of the worst offenders have dropped out. The attrition of violent students may

Reducing Gang Violence at School

As one strategy in their comprehensive gang outreach efforts, Portland Public Schools in Oregon have instituted an innovative approach to reducing gang-associated violence. All students suspended for fighting, weapons violations, gang violence, or assault—most of them gang members—are required to attend special classes before returning to their regular schools. The classes are small, have specially trained teachers, and focus on teaching nonviolence, mediation, and conflict resolution to the students.

For more information, contact
Department of Public Information
and Communications
Portland Public Schools
PO. Box 3107
Portland, OR 97208
503-249-3304

also account for data showing that middle school students are more likely to be victims of crime than high school students (NSSC, 1990a).

Family Risk Factors

The family has always been the most important early influence on children and their development. Parents are a child's first teachers and are in the best position to help a child develop moral responsibility, self-esteem, and nonviolent means of solving problems. The family, along with religious institutions and other community organizations, was the traditional source of values for most children in the past. However, this "source" has been changing over the last quarter century as sweeping changes have come about in the nature of American society and the work force.

> My thirty years of experience in education show conclusively that schools alone, simply modifying the quality of instruction which they offer, are key contributors to violent or to nonviolent behavior among students.
> Dr. Asa Hilliard, III and Fuller E. Callaway, Professor of Urban Education, Georgia State University

The huge growth in the number of single-parent families (over 15 million children nationwide live with only one of their parents) has meant that millions more children lack adult role models, especially male role models; millions more children are poor; and millions of single parents must leave their children in someone else's care or unattended during work hours (Hodgkinson, 1993). Even in two-parent households, both parents usually work. This has led to a lack of supervision for millions of children who need it and who, left to their own devices, often get into trouble (Hodgkinson, 1993). Also, as a smaller percentage of families attend church, church plays a lesser role in children's moral and ethical development than it did in the past.

These societal changes have created gaps in children's development and education that are not always filled; therefore, children often come to school without the same moral grounding and values they once had. Children who are left unsupervised, who live in neighborhoods where crime and violence are daily events, or who are caught in the cycle of disadvantage may turn to violence despite their family's best efforts.

Another precursor to violence is membership in a seriously dysfunctional family. Findings from the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (1988) show that reported cases of child maltreatment rose 66 percent from 1980 to 1986. Whether higher rates of child abuse and neglect indicate a greater problem or better reporting is subject to debate. Children who are physically, sexually, and/or psychologically abused suffer deep and lasting harm, and research has shown that many violent youth were physically abused by their parents or someone else and/or witnessed violence between adults in their home (Gaustad, 1991; Lawton, 1991). Olweus (1987) found that the upbringing of bullies—who often become violent criminals as adults—is typically characterized by too little love, care, and supervision; unclear limits on children's behavior; and physical abuse. The majority of prisoners in our jails were abused as children (Hodgkinson, 1993).

Youth Crime Watch of America

Youth Crime Watch was formed in 1984 to help prevent crime and violence, alcohol and other drug abuse, gang behavior, and school dropout. Youth Crime Watch is a student-led, school-based prevention program that educates students through the power of peers to be aware of the problems and consequences of youth crime and what students can do to prevent it.

In Youth Crime Watch programs, a core group is formed at a school with an advisor, a Youth Crime Watch representative, students selected by the principal or staff, and other program organizers. Core-group members serve as representatives of the program to the rest of the school. Activities and responsibilities of the group include defining the school's needs and problems, promoting school spirit, developing action plans and helping sponsor activities for reducing campus crime, publicizing program successes, and involving additional students.

School groups work with local businesses that offer donations and materials for Youth Crime Watch activities. Also, collaboration with local law enforcement officials provides materials, guest speakers, and liaison personnel to participating schools.

For more information or to receive a copy of the Youth Crime Watch newsletter, write or call

Youth Crime Watch of America, Inc.
5220 Biscayne Boulevard
Suite 207
Miami, FL 33137
305-758-9292

Individual and Peer Risk Factors

Aggressive Personalities

Physicians and psychiatrists recognize a medical diagnosis known as Antisocial Personality Disorder (Reid, 1985). Educators should not assume that all or even many violent young people suffer from such a disorder, but it is a possibility in severe cases. Research has also suggested that students with learning disabilities have an increased tendency to engage in delinquent behaviors. If a learning disability is not detected or is not addressed through alternative educational strategies, students may react inappropriately to frustrations and failures in school (Rapp, 1988).

It is inappropriate to view bullying as normal behavior. Victims of bullies can suffer lasting damage, and small bullies can grow to become "big" (i.e., criminal) bullies if their inappropriate behaviors are not addressed.

Some youth may display a tendency to act more aggressively than others; this behavior may be learned or result from a lack of social and conflict-resolution skills. Research shows that young children who are allowed to express aggressive impulses inappropriately may develop a habit of aggressive behavior that is difficult to change when they are older (Perry, 1987). Characteristics of aggressive youth include attributing hostility to others, not trying to understand all the facts of a situation, and having no nonviolent solutions from which to draw in difficult or stressful situations.

One form of violence that seems to be directly connected to an aggressive personality pattern is bullying—a common school problem. While bullying occurs at all grade levels, it is inappropriate to view it as normal, "kids-will-be-kids" behavior. Victims of bullies can suffer lasting damage, and small bullies can grow to become "big" (i.e., criminal) bullies if their inappropriate behaviors are not addressed.

Gangs

Bullying, robbery, extortion, weapons possession, attacks on teachers and students, fights between students—all these types of school violence may occur apart from gang activity. But gangs provide a tenacious framework in which such violence takes root and thrives. What might have been isolated incidents, triggered by personal anger and frustration, become meaningful skirmishes in an ongoing gang conflict.

Gangs of various forms exist in most cities today as well as in many small towns and rural areas. Often involved with drug dealing and weapons, gangs are a primary source of societal violence that infiltrates schools. Because many gang members are of school age and students are a primary market for drug dealing, schools are a natural gathering place for gangs. Padilla (1992)

found that gang members turn to drug dealing and gang affiliations in part because they do not believe that they can achieve their material goals through traditional jobs. As Padilla explains, "These young men do not believe in the power of education to be the 'great equalizer,' nor do they see existing 'legitimate work' as capable of leading them to a successful, meaningful life" (102).

Older students may flaunt weapons, wealth, and their powerful status due to their gang membership, and younger students want the same. These younger children agree to hold weapons for gang members and serve as lookouts for drug deals; they may ultimately join the gang merely for protection from other gangs who suspect their affiliation (Morganthau et al., 1992; Padilla, 1992).

Research has also shown that many youth who join gangs are searching for the family life that they do not have at home; they want a sense of affection and belonging (Burke, 1991; Padilla, 1992). Members of the same gang often wear similar clothing or hair styles, adopt gang nicknames, and spend most of their time together. This close affiliation produces intense loyalty and a willingness to do whatever is necessary to preserve the gang. Violence—in order to keep a member in line, defend a drug-dealing turf, or take revenge on an individual in another gang—comes with the "territory." It is inevitable that schools, where members of different gangs come in contact every day, become an occasional battleground.

Drugs

Student use of alcohol and other drugs is often a contributing factor in violent behavior. Based on the blood-alcohol levels of homicide victims, alcohol appears to be involved in more than half of all homicides (Prothrow-Stith, 1987). (Statistics on blood-alcohol levels of murderers at the time of their crimes are not available.) Alcohol and many other drugs dull inhibitions that normally prevent people from acting on violent impulses. In addition, the cost of buying illicit drugs and the profits that can be gained from their sale have led to a tremendous rise in youth crime. For example, youth involved with drugs will steal to support their habits or carry lethal weapons to protect themselves and their drug-dealing turf. ●

Chapter 5

National, State, and Local School Safety Initiatives and Issues

A comprehensive plan for school safety not only looks at prevention, intervention, and risk factors, but also aligns with local, state, and federal requirements. This can be a confusing and shifting process. However, successful schools and districts are able to incorporate the various levels of requirements into their plans while incorporating various sources of support into a comprehensive safety plan and program. This section includes information on a number of policies and programs that may assist schools in their efforts to curtail school violence and build resiliency. The initiatives demonstrate the growing federal, state, and local commitment to school safety and the backing of that commitment with taxpayer dollars. Please note that references to funding and agencies were accurate at the time of this printing; subsequent legislation at the federal and state levels is certain to modify funding amounts and sources.

National Initiatives

The federal government has increased its role in addressing school violence through several important legislative acts. While some, such as the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, focus on particular aspects of violence, most have broader mandates and include funding for state and local education agencies.

The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994

This act authorizes funds to be disbursed through several federal agencies until the year 2000. Grants will be available for intervention and responses to juvenile criminal activity and violence, in addition to other programs that focus on adult crime and violence. These programs include the following:

- **Department of Health and Human Services**—$567 million disbursed to states in formula grants from 1996-2000 for community schools to supervise after-school, weekend, and summer programs for at-risk youths.
- **President's Prevention Council**—$88.5 million from 1996-2000 to develop and administer prevention programs, coordinate planning, and provide training and technical assistance to communities and community organizations. Competitive grants will provide support for programs in summer and after-school care, mentoring and tutoring, job training and placement, and prevention and treatment targeting substance abuse, child abuse, and teenage pregnancy. Local governments, Indian tribal governments, school boards, colleges and universities, private non-profit organizations, or consortia of such entities can apply.
- **Violence Against Women Act**—$974 million for 1996-2000 to fund programs for prosecution, education, outreach, and prevention programs.
- **Crime Prevention Block Grants**—$337 million to units of local government for crime prevention, intervention, and treatment initiatives.
- **Delinquent and At-Risk Youth**—$36 million in grants for public or private non-profit organizations

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Television Campaign to Reduce School Violence

The National Campaign to Reduce School Violence was initiated by public television. In addition to broadcasting such programs as *What Can We Do About Violence? A Bill Moyers Special*, the campaign works with community and national organizations on several major objectives:

- Providing telecommunications tools and other support to reduce youth violence
- Showcasing successful school- and community-based violence-prevention programs
- Promoting youth involvement in the reduction of violence
- Encouraging individual involvement to reduce violence

The National Campaign to Reduce School Violence has produced a community resource guide highlighting effective models of violence reduction and intervention. It covers such topics as youth gang projects, conflict resolution, teen dating violence, and violence reduction curricula. The resource guide also includes a list of model initiatives, organizations, publications, and videos on dealing with violence.

For more information, contact
National Campaign to Reduce School Violence
901 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004-2037
202-879-9839

to develop and operate projects providing residential services for at-risk youth.

- **Department of Housing and Urban Development**—$1.6 billion formula grant authorized by the Local Partnership Act to enhance education, provide substance abuse treatment, and fund job programs to prevent crimes.
- **Model Intensive Grants**—$625 million in competitive grants to support model crime-prevention programs targeting high-crime neighborhoods.
- **Department of the Interior**—$4.5 million in competitive grants for localities to provide urban recreation for at-risk youth in high-crime areas and additional services for at-risk youth in other areas.
- **Office of Justice Programs**—$971 million in competitive grants for drug courts to support state and local courts providing supervision and specialized services to non-violent drug offenders.

(*Grants and Resource News*, 1995)

Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders

This program was developed through the U.S. Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). The OJJDP has identified five general principles as a guide to preventing and reducing juvenile delinquency:

- Strengthen the family in its primary responsibility to instill moral values and provide guidance and support to children, or provide a surrogate family.
- Support core institutions, such as schools, community organizations, and religious institutions in their roles of developing responsible youth.
- Promote delinquency prevention as the most cost-effective way to deal with juvenile delinquency.
- Intervene immediately and effectively when delinquent behavior occurs.
- Identify and control the small group of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders.

(Wilson & Howell, 1994)

The intervention component of this program calls for a range of graduated sanctions, including boot camps as an immediate sanction for nonviolent juveniles. The program also stresses an after-care phase that involves the family and the community in supporting and reintegrating the juvenile into the community. The goal is to prevent juvenile offenders from becoming violent offenders through preemptive intervention.

Children-At-Risk (CAR)

Children-At-Risk is a joint public-private substance abuse prevention program in Savannah, Georgia, that focuses on improving the lives of high-risk children, their families, and communities. CAR is managed by the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University and brings together social and criminal justice agencies to address 11- to 13-year-olds living in an impoverished section of Savannah. Preliminary evaluations show that targeted youths have improved their academic performance and attendance and also shows a reduction in out-of-school illegal activities.
(*Grants and Resource News*, 1995)

For more information, contact
Chatham-Savannah Youth Futures Authority
316 East Bay Street
Savannah, GA 31401
921-651-6810

The grant program provides for federal, state, and local collaboration and requires, among other things, a comprehensive plan among state and local entities. Ten percent of the funds have been designated by the Department of Justice for training to help states meet the grant requirements or to expand current efforts in the required areas. The legislation clearly intends for the states to share funds with local governments for plan implementation.

The Comprehensive Strategy serves as a model for the OJJDP's Safe Futures: Partnerships to Reduce Youth Violence and Delinquency. This program (so far funded only for 1995) is a comprehensive delinquency prevention and intervention program meant to enhance public safety and provide care for at-risk and delinquent children. Communities will assess the risk factors in the environment leading to delinquent behavior and develop a range of responses (*Grants and Resource News*, 1995).

Improving America's Schools Act of 1994: Title IV–Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities

Formerly the Drug-Free Schools program, the expanded Act allows schools for the first time to address school safety as well as drug prevention. Schools have a considerable amount of flexibility in the types of prevention programs they can develop. Thirty percent of overall funds have to be targeted to the 10 percent of school districts in each state experiencing the greatest problems. States and districts have the flexibility to determine how to measure these problems as well as to set their own goals and objectives.

The act requires that each state establish certain guidelines in their applications, including

- A description of coordination of funds with Goal 2000 objectives
- A needs assessment for drug and violence prevention programs
- Extensive interagency collaboration and planning input at the state level that includes alcohol and drug abuse agencies, health and mental health services, criminal justice planning agencies, the state board of education, parents, students, and community-based organizations
- Cooperation with the U.S. DOE in conducting a national impact evaluation of programs

Funding to each state for this program is decided according to two criteria: relative student enrollment and proportion of the population under the poverty level. Within each state, 80 percent of the funding goes to the state education agency and 20 percent to the governor's office. Each office must enact a comprehensive plan with measurable goals and objectives, coordinate strategies with other agencies, and establish guidelines for dissemination of funds.

Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994

The Gun-Free Schools Act (GFSA) stipulates that every state receiving funds under the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA] of 1965) must enforce a state law requiring local education agencies (LEA) to expel from school for at least a year any student who brings a firearm to school. The state law must also allow the chief administrator of the LEA to modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. No funds from the ESEA will be available to local educa-

tion agencies unless the requirements of the GFSA are met. Each state must report annually on LEA compliance and on expulsions under the Gun-Free Schools Act. LEAs must also have in place a policy of referral to the Criminal Justice or the Juvenile Delinquency system of students who bring firearms to school. Funds from the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act may be used here to provide alternative education opportunities for expelled students. See Appendix E for more information on requirements of this Act.

Funds for Delinquency Prevention

The Title II, Part B Formula Grant Program supports delinquency prevention programs in many states. Recipients include private not-for-profit and for-profit agencies and local governments funding programs in alternatives to jail, community-based youth services, and delinquency prevention. Within such programs, there can be categories for a statewide directory of children's services to increase public awareness of existing programs, encourage agency use, and facilitate juvenile referrals to the necessary services.

The Title V, Delinquency Prevention Program of the federal OJJDP provides seed money for community-based, comprehensive delinquency prevention strategies. The 1995 funding of $900,000 assists in the needs assessments of local agencies addressing juvenile delinquency (*Grants and Resource News*, 1995). For example, in its 1993-94 Action Plan, the New York City Board of Education advocates the establishment of after-school athletic leagues to keep kids off the streets and under adult supervision during high-risk hours. Division of School Safety officers participate as coaches and referees.

State and Local Initiatives

While national initiatives set the tone for reducing school violence, delineate areas of administrative support, and establish funding options, it is at the state and local levels that concrete issues are addressed and practical solutions are implemented. States with good programs develop a framework of basic elements for use by district and local agencies as they work out their own comprehensive plans. These states enact legislation that clarifies administrative and programmatic functions, identifies funding support for district and local initiatives, and designates areas of responsibility at various levels. In the California and Florida plans, for example, an appendix specifies the legislative acts or court cases that have established precedence in virtually every area involving school violence or student discipline problems. Each state can designate an agency and contact person for referral of questions from local levels concerning compliance with state initiatives and pertinent legislation.

The following are some basic areas a strong comprehensive plan should focus on, along with examples of methods various states have used to address these areas.

Interagency Collaboration and Information Sharing

States can reduce the redundancy of programs and improve the value of funding by emphasizing interagency collaboration. This stretches the ever-dwindling resource dollar and improves the response time to emerging trends identified by the various agencies.

Collaboration is built into the Consolidated State Plan for the Commonwealth in Puerto Rico, where a series of orientation sessions are held for representatives of each program included in the Plan to share their program goals and objectives, along with statutes, legislation, and regulations governing their participation.

In Florida, the Resource Network Team (RNT), an outgrowth of the Florida Interagency Collaborative Federal Funding Workshop, met to assess ways to strengthen agency partnerships. Representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation, Health and Rehabilitative Services, and the Departments of Education, Community Affairs, Labor and Employment Security, and Juvenile Justice developed goals to acquire federal, state, and other funds and identified methods and opportunities for other state and local entities to maximize resources and funding. An additional benefit was the coordination of public agencies with similar missions to youth and families in local communities.

A major part of interagency collaboration is information sharing. A system of notification and referral across agencies is essential for schools to rely on services and personnel outside of their expertise. The California Education Code, for instance, delineates which instances of violent behavior require interagency information sharing. The cross-reporting allows a systematic response to violence and provides safeguards that such behavior will not compromise the safety of others in the school and general community. This cross-reporting requires a state-level legislative mandate on the sharing of juvenile records and should establish which

representatives within each agency shall have access to the records.

Assessment and Program Planning

States and local districts need to gather information that identifies variables that feed the growth of violence, such as school attendance, truancy, school failure rates, suspension or expulsion trends, as well as details on delinquent actions themselves–drug- or alcohol-related incidents, possession of guns, and other disciplinary problems. Other identifiers of possible juvenile violence are child abuse or domestic violence reports. Juvenile court and law enforcement records should be factored in, as well as reports from social service and health agencies.

Assessment depends on access to consistent and uniform data on what is happening in schools. As mentioned in previous sections, several states now mandate school staff reporting of the knowledge of violent behavior on campus, with some states stipulating penalties for failure to do so. Virginia, for example, has collected data on acts of violence and substance abuse since 1991-92. This information is used to assess trends and current conditions, identify target populations, develop prevention and intervention strategies, identify staff development needs, and assist in long-range planning.

In 1993, New York State's Education Department and the Division of Criminal Justice Services issued a statewide survey to school superintendents, teachers, students, and principals on the nature and extent of school violence. The results were used to develop a database to help policymakers, school professionals, and interested parties in developing and supporting safe schools' programs.

In West Virginia, a state mandate (H.B. 2073) requires that each local school will seat a school improvement council whose purpose is to develop and deliver a safe schools report to a county-wide council by June 1995. The report will include recommendations for preventive discipline programs, coordination among agencies, alternative education, and student involvement programs. The county-wide council's responsibility is to review these reports and compile the school improvement guidelines and deliver them, along with guidelines and recommendations, to the state board of education. The board then reports to the governor and the legislative oversight committee on the adopted guidelines, along with estimated costs for alternative educational proposals requested in the guidelines.

Several states have involved youth in their assessment and planning efforts. The Minnesota Youth Task Force was formed in 1993 to solicit input from youth on various juvenile justice issues. Nine high school students were selected to conduct public hearings in October and November of 1993 at six high schools around the state and make recommendations to the Minnesota Supreme Court Task Force on the Juvenile Justice System. The four key issues were

1. Certification to adult court for criminal prosecution
2. Juvenile records
3. Due process issues
4. Prevention recommendations

Students and teachers in West Virginia held a one-day summit on school safety and violence-prevention issues. Two students, two teachers, and the principal or another administrator from each high school in the state attended the summit. Participants from the individual schools met later to formulate plans to take back to their schools. After the summits, students initiated community discussions about violence and took steps to curtail anger and stress, both of which they saw as ingredients of violent conflict (*Profile*, 1994).

Intervention Initiatives

A variety of initiatives have been implemented in states to intervene when students break the law or behavior gets out of control. These range from putting security personnel in schools, outlining procedures for removal of students from schools, and returning them after arrest or detention to making rules that cover all aspects of school safety and juvenile justice.

The security monitor/officer is an important member of any school working on improving safety. Whether employed full-time as a security officer or incorporated as part of the duties of the school's resource officer, security personnel emphasize the school's commitment to eliminating violence and discipline problems.

In 1992-93, Dade County Public Schools employed 272 full-time and 217 part-time security monitors, which accounted for 46% of that school system's security expenditures. The security monitors are supervised by school administration and are part of the teacher's bargaining unit, which supports them as a priority issue (*Safe Orderly Schools*, 1993). In New York City's Action Plan, provisions are made for school security person-

nel to work with the New York Police Department to develop protocols and procedures and to receive training for response to violent incidents (*Action Plan*, 1993).

In *Safe Schools: A Planning Guide for Action*, California supplies a rigorous process for the removal of any student from school. This includes a list of actions for which a student might be removed, which school representatives are allowed to recommend expulsion, and due process steps. When the violent behavior becomes serious enough, the responsibility for discipline shifts to the courts. The state comprehensive plan, along with the relevant judicial agencies, establishes guidelines for trying and sentencing juveniles. These guidelines also stipulate processes for reincorporating the student back into the educational system, either in the regular school environment with appropriate restrictions, or in alternative schools for disciplinary problems and rehabilitation.

Some states and districts have established 24-hour hotlines for students to make reporting anonymous and easier for school staff and others to report violent behavior on campus. A hotline can be developed in conjunction with local businesses which help defray the cost of the service.

In 1994, Florida's State Board of Education passed the Zero Tolerance Rule under which local administrators could invoke the most severe consequences provided for under the Code of Student Conduct in response to acts of violence. The Rule also established procedures for notifying law enforcement personnel of school violence and for training school personnel on how to respond to violence.

Prevention Initiatives

Intervening early with high-risk youth shows the most promise for heading off or reversing juvenile violence. Violence-prevention initiatives are numerous and varied across states. State funding for violence-prevention curricula is available for instruction in conflict resolution, peer mediation, and alternatives to violence. In several states, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Programs utilize various portions of the 1994 federal crime bill to fund prevention programs.

One of the most important aspects of violence prevention is targeting the environmental factors leading to violence. Prevention programs for at-risk children can identify early behavior patterns that are often precursors to violent behavior. In 1995, Virginia published information on violence prevention strategies as part of a three-year project design to bring together school and community leaders to work toward violence prevention. Funded through the U.S. Safe and Drug-Free School and Communities Act, the publication is based on recommendations from a 1992 report and serves as a basis for regional violence prevention seminars. For more information on the publication and the project, contact the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Education, AOD Center, at 1-800-762-6309.

Safe Zones

Safe zones address the issue of safe passage to and from school. Zones generally encompass not only the school itself but nearby areas as well. Safe zone needs assessment and assignments of corridors can be incorporated into school safety action planning or school reform efforts. In New York City, the city's action plan for school safety calls on each school's safety committee to develop a safe corridor needs assessment for every student. This initiative is based on information from police, students, parents, and school officials and is implemented through community partnerships and local businesses. The Safe Schools Act of 1994 provides funds for establishing safe zones.

Family Issues

Many states have begun efforts to strengthen the family as a major interdiction to violent youth behavior. Domestic violence is one of the prime indicators of future violent tendencies in youth, and intervention here can resolve many issues that crop up disastrously in a school environment. Involving the family as a unit reinforces the importance of a nonviolent environment outside of the

It costs over $100,000 to build a single prison cell and about $25,000 a year to house one prisoner. For $125,000, we could run a year-round youth program, with three paid staff, for 35 or 40 at-risk kids. Our research shows that many youth programs operate with an annual budget of only $25,000 to $30,000 and rely exclusively on volunteers. Yet only a fraction of the youngsters that need constructive out-of-school activities participate in any kind of structured programs. Our policy priorities are simply wrong.

Katherine McFate, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

school and provides families with information on available services and programs to assist them. Social service agencies can provide education on nonviolent alternatives for families as well as identify specific instances of domestic violence.

The Florida Task Force on Domestic Violence made several recommendations for schools and educational programs in its 1994 report to the Governor:

- Include intervention and referral for students and family members where domestic violence is identified.
- Encourage schools to establish relationships with the local domestic violence center.
- Include domestic violence in any anti-violence curriculum and any state plan for community education.
- Implement course material on non-violent parenting skills.
- Train the school resource officer in domestic violence procedures.
- Integrate issues of domestic violence into full-service schools.

Some states are also bringing parents into the arrest and detention of juveniles. For example, South Carolina and Alabama now mandate parent involvement in the disciplinary process as co-respondents to the student's violation of the law. In South Carolina, family courts may require parental attendance at any proceedings concerning their children and participation in the case management of violent children; failure to comply is punishable by contempt of court proceedings against the parent. Parents may also be required to attend family counseling sessions as part of the court's decision. In Alabama, parents are liable for damages to school property by any student under the age of 18.

Litigation Issues

Protection of Students

Schools are often charged with negligence when students are injured or traumatized, and the courts have held that "although a school may not be expected to be a guarantor or insurer of the safety of its students, it is expected to provide, in addition to an intellectual climate, a physical environment harmonious with the purposes of an educational institution" (Rapp et al., 1992, p. 17). In general, however, schools are not usually held liable unless the violence was reasonably foreseeable.

Does the U.S. Constitution impose a responsibility on schools and districts to protect students? In its 1989 decision in *DeShaney v. Winnebago County Department of Social Services*, the Supreme Court held that the due process right to protection under the 14th Amendment did not impose a duty on a social services agency to protect a 4-year-old child who was abused and permanently brain-damaged by his father, even though the agency had evidence of physical abuse (Sendor, 1994). Most lower courts have found that schools do not have a "custodial" relationship akin to, for example, that between administrators and patients at a state mental hospital, even though students are compelled to attend school (Walsh, 1992, p. 10). A circuit court case in Texas, however, reached a different conclusion. It ruled that compulsory attendance laws give schools "functional custody" of students during school hours and that it is a reasonable expectation "that the state will provide a safe school environment." This case raises concerns for school officials that they may be deemed responsible for violence that is less directly connected to schools, such as gang violence or attacks in the school's neighborhood (Walsh, 1992).

Rapp et al. (1992) state that a school "has a duty to guard its students against dangers of which it has actual knowledge and those which it should reasonably anticipate" (74), and they recommend that schools work to ensure that students and staff are protected from the following risks:

- Foreseeable criminal activity
- Student crime or violence that can be prevented by adequate supervision
- Identifiably dangerous students
- Dangerous individuals negligently admitted to school
- Dangerous individuals negligently placed in school
- School administrators, teachers, and staff who have been negligently selected, retained, or trained (18)

The issue of foreseeable injury was addressed by the 10th U.S. Circuit Court in its opinion on an Oklahoma case, *Graham v. Independent School District No. I-89*. The suit was filed by a mother whose son was shot and killed on school grounds by another student whose threats were known to school employees. The mother's claim was that her son had a right to protection under the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment. The court, relying on the *DeShaney* decision, found unanimously for the school district, ruling that the Due Process Clause

does not make school officials legal guarantors of a student's safety. But the court noted that, under Oklahoma law, the parents might fare better filing suit under personal injury law, since school districts can be liable in tort suits for failing to protect students against foreseeable injuries (Sendor, 1994).

In 1992, the high court ruled that in cases of sexual abuse, school officials who are aware of the problem but fail to take appropriate action to stop it may be held liable and sued for monetary damages (Lumsden, 1992). Schools have also been held liable when instances of negligent hiring, training, and supervision of sexually abusive teachers has led to sexual abuse of students or when improper supervision of students or inadequate security has permitted sexually abusive behavior. Adoption of a strong policy prohibiting sexual harassment provides some assurance that prevention is a priority and that complaints will be investigated thoroughly.

School Searches

Until 1985, schools needed search warrants or emergency circumstances to search the belongings of students. But the 1985 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* significantly broadened schools' rights to search. In an effort to balance the rights of the student against the greater weight of society's need for protection and safety, the Supreme Court held that schools need only show "reasonable" rather than probable cause for searching a student's belongings. Should reasonable cause be found, the search should be conducted by the least intrusive method (*School Violence*, 1993, pp. 40-41).

The Florida Crime Prevention Training Institute recommends that school authorities observe an escalating scale of reasonableness when contemplating a search. That scale includes:

- Abandoned articles
- Lockers
- Locker contents and containers therein
- Bookbags
- Purses and pockets
- Outer clothing
- Body search
- Strip search

(*School Violence*, 1993, pp. 48-50)

Only the suspicion of a felony justifies a strip search, at which point a police officer should be called in to make the decision whether to search. However, the *T.L.O.* decision addresses only searches performed by school officials.

Metal Detectors

An area of concern for schools is the use of metal detectors to search students. Metal detectors are viewed as a preventative measure where the influx of weapons into a school has become a problem. A New York court has held in *People v. Duke* that such a search does not violate the student's Fourth Amendment rights against unreasonable searches, which are outweighed by the school system's right to prevent violent crime (Wilson & Zirkel, 1994). However, several guidelines should be established by the school to avoid problems that might arise from the use of metal detectors. Besides the presence of a reasonable cause (the prevalence of weapons and violence on school grounds), the school should

- Give advance warning of the use of metal detectors because this avoids due process issues and serves as a deterrent.
- Make sure the search is equitable; if administrators cannot search every student, the search must not be based on race, gender, or ethnicity. Even "random" searches should be carefully designed (e.g., every fifth student or every other week) and have exact criteria.
- Seek consent, but proceed if necessary without it; as the court put it, "consent is hardly a necessary component of a valid administrative search."
- Develop and follow written guidelines for the initial and any follow-up search to maintain consistency and privacy. (Wilson & Zirkel, 1994)

Although many school districts now use metal detectors, metal detectors have disadvantages: they are expensive, may make students feel like criminals, and are hardly a foolproof solution because students can still pass weapons through school windows or hide them outside. Metal detectors are also impractical for schools with many entrances and/or with several buildings connected by outdoor walkways.

Drug Testing

Local, state, and federal courts have generally supported schools and school systems that test athletes for drug use. Proponents of urinalysis have successfully argued

that students can be tested upon suspicion of use and for the athletes' safety. In a June 1995 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld (in an Oregon case involving a 12-year-old) that urinalysis is not a constitutional violation of privacy. Safety was the critical issue: "Due to alterations of mood, reduction of motor coordination, and changes in the perception of pain attributable to drug use, the health and safety of athletes was particularly threatened [by drug use]" (*New York Times*, July 3, 1995, p. 35). Noting other precedents related to student testing—required physical examinations and glucose tests for athletes—the high court found that students have less privacy than others. ●

Appendix A

Definitions for School Incident Types

As schools, school districts, and states attempt to collect and study data on the nature and scope of school violence, it is important to use standard definitions to ensure uniformity of data and reporting. The following terms are defined as they relate to infractions committed at schools or at school-sponsored events and based on state statutes and federal law where necessary. Definitions should be reviewed before adoption for compliance with state statutes.

ALCOHOL (liquor law violations, possession, use, sale): The violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, or use of intoxicating alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol; this would include intoxication at school, school-sponsored events, and on school-sponsored transportation. Use should be reported only if students are caught in the act of using, are tested, and use found by an officer during/after arrest or are discovered to have used in the course of investigating the incident.

ARSON (setting a fire on/in school property): To unlawfully and intentionally damage or attempt to damage any real or personal property by fire or incendiary device.

> Examples include: firecrackers, fireworks, and trash can fires if they are contributors to a damaging fire. Without a fire, firecrackers and fireworks are included in the Other Weapons code.

BATTERY (physical attack/harm): An actual and intentional touching or striking of another person against his or her will or intentionally causing bodily harm to an individual—when one individual physically attacks or "beats up" another individual. Includes an attack with a weapon or one that causes serious bodily harm to the victim. Battery also includes the placement of a bomb or one sent through the mail, regardless of whether the bomb explodes. This category should be used only when the attack is very serious, serious enough to warrant calling the police or bringing in security, where the intent is to do bodily harm to someone. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

> Examples include: striking that causes bleeding, broken nose, kicking while a student is down.

BREAKING & ENTERING/BURGLARY (school building): The unlawful entry into a building or other structure with the intent to commit a crime. This applies to school buildings or activities related to a school function.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT (serious class or campus disruption, etc.): Any act that substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function; behavior that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

> Examples include: serious instances of classroom or campus disruption, such as pulling the fire alarm, defiance of authority, disobeying or showing disrespect to others, using obscene or inappropriate language or gestures, and disruptive demonstrations.

DRUGS—EXCLUDING ALCOHOL (illegal drug possession, sale, use/under the influence): The unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance or equipment/devices used for preparing or taking drugs or narcotics. Includes being under the influence of drugs at school, at school-sponsored events, or on school transportation or substances represented as drugs. Use should be reported only if students are caught in the act of using, are tested, and use found by officer during/after arrest or are discovered to have used in the course of investigating the incident. Category includes over-the-counter medications if abused by the student. Category does not include tobacco.

FIGHTING (mutual altercation): Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence, where there is no one main offender and no major injury. Does not include verbal confrontations, tussles, or other minor confrontations. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

FIREARMS: For the new federal gun law, the definition of firearms contains the following three components:

1. Firearm (as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code):
   a. Any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive
   b. Any weapon which will, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter
2. Firearm component or attachment
   c. Any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device that expels a projectile, or any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled
   d. The frame or receiver of any weapon designed to or be converted to expel a projectile
   e. Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer
3. Explosive, incendiary, or poison gas: An explosive is any chemical compound or mixture that has the property of yielding readily to combustion or oxidation upon application of heat, flame, or shock, including but not limited to dynamite, nitroglycerin, trinitrotoluene, or ammonium nitrate when combined with other ingredients to form an explosive mixture, blasting caps, and detonators (F.S. 790.001 (5)). This category does not include Class-C common fireworks.
   a. Any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas:
      - bomb,
      - grenade,
      - rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces,
      - missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce,
      - mine, or
      - similar device

HOMICIDE (killed on campus): Murder and non-negligent manslaughter, killing of one human being by another, killing a person through negligence.

KIDNAPPING (abduction): The unlawful seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will, or of a minor without the consent of his/her custodial parent(s) or legal guardian.

LARCENY/THEFT (personal or school property, or from vehicle on school property): The unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property of another person without threat, violence, or bodily harm. Included are pocket picking, purse or backpack snatching if left unattended or no force used to take it from owner, theft from a building, theft from a motor vehicle or motor vehicle parts or accessories, theft of bicycles, theft from a machine or device operated or activated by the use of a coin or token, and all other types of larcenies. This category includes theft of such things as a car stereo, speakers, or hub caps. The larceny/theft category should be used only when theft is serious enough to warrant calling the police or bringing in security. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT (includes attempted): Theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.

Category includes theft of car, truck, motorcycle, dune buggy, RV, or other self-propelled vehicle.

OTHER MAJOR OFFENSES/UNCLASSIFIED (e.g., forgery, extortion, possession of an electronic beeper): Any major incident resulting in disciplinary action not classified previously, including but not limited to bribery, fraud, embezzlement, forgery, gambling, extortion/blackmail, stolen property, driving under the influence, possession of beepers, or other action not included in any other category. Also includes possession of school-defined contraband.

OTHER WEAPONS POSSESSION (includes weapons other than firearms): Possession, use, or intent to use

any instrument or object to inflict harm on another person or to intimidate any person. Included in this category are all types of knives, chains (any not being used for the purpose for which it was normally intended and capable of harming an individual), pipe (any length or metal not being used for the purpose it was normally intended), razor blades or similar instruments with sharp cutting edges, ice picks, dirks, other pointed instruments (including pencils, pens), nunchakus, brass knuckles, Chinese stars, billy clubs, tear gas guns, electrical weapons or devices (stun gun), BB or pellet guns, explosives or propellants.

ROBBERY (using force): The taking, or attempting to take, anything of value that is owned by another person or organization, under confrontational circumstances by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear. A key difference between robbery and larceny is that a threat or battery is involved in a robbery.

Examples include: extortion of lunch money.

SEXUAL BATTERY (includes attempted): Oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by, or union with, the sexual organ of another or the anal or vaginal penetration of another by any other object, or attempts forcibly and/or against the person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her youth or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity. Includes rape, fondling which includes touching of private body parts of another person (either through human contact or using an object), indecent liberties, child molestation, and/or sodomy. These incidents are severe enough to warrant calling in law enforcement. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

1. To discriminate against a student in any course or program of study in any educational institution, in the evaluation of academic achievement, or in providing benefits, privileges, and placement services on the basis of that student's submission to or rejection of sexual advances or requests for sexual favors by administrators, staff, teachers, students, or other school board employees.

2. To create or allow to exist an atmosphere of sexual harassment, defined as deliberate, repeated, and unsolicited physical actions, gestures, or verbal or written comments of a sexual nature, when such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment.

Keys to Definition: Unwanted, repeated, verbal or physical sexual behavior which is offensive and objectionable to the recipient, causes discomfort or humiliation, and interferes with school performance. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

Examples include: behaviors such as leering, pinching, grabbing, suggestive comments or jokes, pressure to engage in sexual activity, and the following:

- Using the computer to leave sexual messages or playing computer sex games
- Rating an individual - for example, on a scale from 1 to 10
- "Wedgies"—pulling underwear up at the waist so it goes between the buttocks
- Making kissing sounds or smacking sounds; licking the lips suggestively
- "Spiking"—pulling down someone's pants
- Howling, catcalls, whistles
- Touching (breast, buttock, etc.)
- Verbal comments (about parts of the body, clothing, etc.)
- Spreading sexual rumors
- Sexual or dirty jokes
- Massaging the neck and shoulders
- Touching oneself sexually in front of others

SEX OFFENSES (lewd behavior, indecent exposure): This includes sexual intercourse, sexual contact, or other unlawful behavior or conduct intended to result in sexual gratification without force or threat of force and where the victim is capable of giving consent. Includes indecent exposure (exposure of private body parts to the sight of another person in a lewd or indecent manner in a public place); and obscenity (conduct which by community standards is deemed to corrupt public morals by its indecency and/or lewdness; such as phone calls or other communication, unlawful manufacture, publishing, selling, buying, or possessing materials, such

as literature or photographs). Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

Examples include: Entering or downloading pornographic content (words or pictures) onto school computers. This category does not include mooning, kissing, swearing, or profanity.

THREAT/INTIMIDATION (physical or verbal threat or intimidation): To unlawfully place another person in fear of bodily harm through verbal threats without displaying a weapon or subjecting the person to actual physical attack. Administrators need to consider age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category.

Examples include: a bomb threat, threats made over the telephone, or threats that someone else will beat them up.

TOBACCO (possession, use): The possession, use, distribution, or sale of tobacco products on school grounds, school-sponsored events, and on transportation to and from school or other school transportation.

TRESPASSING (school property or school function): To enter or remain on a public school campus or school board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry, including students under suspension or expulsion, and unauthorized persons who enter or remain on a campus or school board facility after being directed to leave by the chief administrator or designee of the facility, campus, or function.

VANDALISM (damage to or destruction of school or personal property): The willful and/or malicious destruction, damage, or defacement of public or private property, real or personal, without the consent of the owner or the person having custody or control of it. This category includes graffiti.

Examples include: Incidents such as destroying school computer records, carving initials or words in desk top, or spray painting on walls. ●

Appendix B

School Incident Report Form

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
STUDENT REFERRAL/INCIDENT REPORT

TO: ____ Principal's Office
____ Asst. Principal's Office

INCIDENT DATE

For Office Use Only
INCIDENT SITE | INCIDENT NUMBER

TO: ____ Guidance Office
____ Human Relations
____ School/Community Specialist

STUDENT NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial)	Student Number	Homeroom	Period	Race	Sex	GRADES	
						Academic	Conduct

REFERRED/REPORTED BY (Last, First, Middle Initial) _____

1. Teacher/Instructor
2. Substitute Teacher
3. Assistant Principal
4. District Administrator
5. Non-Instructor
6. Parent
7. Principal
8. School Resource Officer
9. Student
10. Bus Driver (send copy to Trans. Dept.)
11. Crimewatch
12. Other

ACTIONS TAKEN PRIOR TO REFERRAL (Circle All That Apply)

1. Changed Student's Seat
2. Checked Student's Folder
3. Parent Conference/Date: _____
4. Student Conference
5. Detention
6. Lowered Conduct Grade
7. Mediation
8. Referred to A.P./Admin. Asst.
9. Referred to Guidance
10. Referred to Human Relations
11. Sent Report Home
12. Telephoned Parent/Date: _____
13. Other

REASON FOR REFERRAL _____

INCIDENT LOCATION (Circle One)

1. Administrative Offices
2. Auditorium
3. Bus Ramp
4. Classroom
5. Gymnasium
6. Hallway
7. Library
8. Lunchroom
9. Parking Lot
10. P.E./Playground
11. Rest Room
12. Other (On Campus) _____
13. School Sponsored Event Off-Campus
14. School Sponsored Transportation Bus # _____

INCIDENT CONTEXT (Circle One)

1. During School Hours
2. Non-School Hours (School-Sponsored Activity)
3. Non-School Sponsored Activity
4. Unrelated Event

INCIDENT INVOLVEMENT TYPE (Circle One)

1. Student
2. Non-Student
3. Both Student and Non-Student
4. Unknown

CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY TO THIS EVENT

1. Alcohol
2. Narcotics
3. Gang
4. Hate Crime
5. Firearm
6. Knife
7. Other Weapon
8. Reported to Law Enforcement

INCIDENT TYPE (Circle One)

1. Alcohol
2. Arson
3. Battery
4. Breaking/Entering
5. Disorderly Conduct
6. Fighting
7. Homicide
8. Kidnapping
9. Larceny/Theft
10. Motor Vehicle Theft
11. Narcotics Excluding Alcohol
12. Robbery
13. Sexual Battery
14. Sexual Harassment
15. Sexual Offense
16. Threat/Intimidation
17. Tobacco
18. Trespassing
19. Vandalism
20. Weapons Possession (Circle Weapons Type)
21. Other Major Incidents
51. BUS—Hanging Out of Window
52. BUS—Injurious/Objectionable Articles
53. BUS—Not silent at RR Crossing
54. BUS—Throwing Objects
55. Disobedience/Insubordination
56. Disrespectful
57. Disruptive
58. Dress code
59. Falsification of Records
60. Inappropriate Behavior
61. Left Campus w/o Permission
62. Left Class w/o Permission
63. Non-Compliance with Assigned Discipline
64. Non-Controlled Substance
65. Parking Violations
66. Petty Theft
67. Profanity
68. Skipping Class
69. Tardiness
70. Truancy (All Day)
71. Other Minor Incidents
80. Continuous Disruptive Behavior (Expulsion—Office Use Only)

DISCIPLINARY/REFERRAL ACTION (Circle One) OFFICE USE ONLY

1. Out-of-School Suspension
2. In-School Suspension
3. suspended Bus Privileges
4. Suspended Pending Conference
5. Change of School
6. Change of Schedule/Teacher
7. Conference with Parent Date: _____
8. Conference with Student
9. Corporal Punishment
10. Detention
11. Letter to Parent
12. Loss of Parking Privileges
13. Loss of Privileges
14. Mediation
15. Parent/Gaurdian Pickup (Delivery)
16. Referred to CST/EASST/FSBT
17. Referred to Guidance
18. Reffered to Human Relations/School Community Specialist
19. Student Placed on Probation
20. Phoned Parent/Date: _____
21. Timeout
22. Work Detail
23. Other

ENTER THE NUMBER OF DAYS SUSPENDED (If Disciplinary/Referral Action 1, 2, or 3) _____

CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY TO THE STUDENT WITHIN THE INCIDENT

1. Alcohol
2. Narcotics
3. Gang
4. Hate Crime
5. Firearm
6. Knife
7. Other Weapons
8. Referred for Change of Placement/Expulsion

DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN BY (Circle One)

1. Principal
2. Assistant Principal
3. Administrative Resource Teacher
4. ESE Coordinator
5. School Board/Superintendent
6. Other _____

COMMENTS AND FOLLOW-UP _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE | ADMINISTRATOR SIGNATURE

DATE | DATE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Appendix C

Incident Reporting System Example

Florida School Environmental Safety Reporting System

Need for System

School safety and incidents of violence at schools have become primary concerns to parents, students, teachers, and other school staff statewide. Decisions about allocation of funds and the development of programs aimed at reducing school violence and crime must be based on reliable data about the extent and nature of the school safety problem. To best assess needs, data must be available on such factors as the type, frequency, and location of incidents. Without accurate and timely information, quality plans that effectively address the problem cannot be developed at any level, whether from the state legislature or local school advisory councils.

Accurate, timely, and consistent data were not available in Florida by school or school districts. The information that was being collected was not uniform and used various methods and definitions among districts and schools within a district. Consistency was needed in reporting formats (e.g., whether incidents are reported by number of students or number of incidents), types of categories and definitions of these categories, and reporting of all incidents for all categories on campus.

Overview of the System

The Florida School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting system was designed to ensure uniform data collection and quality data for the benefit of schools, districts, and the state and to achieve the following goals:

- Establish a reliable system for reporting on school safety
- Establish a link between student and incident data
- Provide quality data for needs assessment and program evaluation
- Provide quality data for policy development and resource allocation

This type of reporting allows tracking of a variety of incident-related elements over time. For example, schools will be able to analyze patterns in types of incidents over time and the types of disciplinary actions resulting from incidents. Schools and districts will also be able to connect student information to school incidents, such as patterns in the age and sex of students committing different types of offenses.

Offenses to be tracked and reported to the Florida Department of Education through this system are those that are against the law or represent serious breaches of the student code of conduct. They include mainly those offenses considered severe enough to require the involvement of a school resource or security officer or to be reported to local law enforcement. Examples include possession of a firearm or drugs on campus or vandalism to school property, such as graffiti.

Reporting System Elements

The reporting system contains the following elements:

- Uniform definitions of incidents across schools and districts
- Uniform information on incidents, including the following:
  - site of the incident
  - whether the incident occurred during or outside of school hours and at a school-sponsored or non-school sponsored activity
  - type of incident
  - whether the incident was reported to law enforcement
  - whether the incident was gang-related
  - whether the incident involved some type of weapon
  - whether the incident was alcohol-related
  - whether the incident was drug-related
  - whether the incident was hate crime-related

- whether the offender was a student, non-student, both, or unknown

- Connections between student records and school incidents
  - type of consequences received for involvement in incident (from corporal punishments to court referrals)
  - sex, race, and all other demographic information available on student records

- Major incident types for reporting include
  - alcohol
  - arson
  - battery
  - breaking and entering/burglary
  - disorderly conduct
  - drugs, except alcohol
  - fighting
  - homicide
  - kidnapping
  - larceny/theft
  - motor vehicle theft
  - robbery
  - sexual battery
  - sexual harassment
  - sex offenses
  - threat/intimidation
  - tobacco
  - trespassing
  - vandalism
  - weapons possession
  - other major offenses

Benefits of System to Schools and Districts

Eight pilot districts in Florida implemented the system during the 1994-95 school year. Schools in these districts reported a variety of benefits from the system, including

- School improvement teams had data readily available to review for annual plan development.
- School administrators were able to review data regularly and identify problems.
- Administrators, because of local additions to the system, were able to identify differences in parental involvement in student disciplinary actions by race.
- Schools were able to identify specific problems in serious incidents for the school to target efforts—one school found it was drugs, another fights, and another theft.
- Administrators, because of local additions to the system, were able to identify specific times of day when problems were most likely to occur and develop plans accordingly.
- District personnel had ready access to data needed for expulsion hearings, rather than having the school reconstruct this information.
- School and district personnel were able to access data from all district students, even if they changed schools.

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Appendix D

Sample Parent and Student Discipline Contract

I am a student at _____ School. I have read the rules, policies, and regulations of the school or have had them explained to me. I agree to abide by them.

Signed_____ Date _____

My child, _____, and I have read and discussed the rules, regulations, educational policy, student conduct and dress codes, discipline policy, attendance policy, and homework policy at _____ School.

I agree to encourage my child to follow these rules and policies and undertake to become personally involved in my child's education.

Signed_____ Date _____

Signed_____ Date _____

Address _____

_____

Phone number_____

Parent and Student Discipline Contract, 1991

Appendix E

Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994

(Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, Public Law 103-382)

Each state receiving federal funds under the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 must have, in effect, by October 20, 1995, a state law requiring local educational agencies (LEAs) to expel from school, for a period of not less than one year, any student found to have brought a firearm (see definition below) onto campus. The law must allow the LEA's chief administering officer to modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. Students with disabilities must be disciplined in accordance with the requirements of Part B of the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Requirements of Act for State:

- Have law in effect requiring expulsion of student for at least one year after found to have firearm on campus
- Have law in effect allowing the LEA's chief administering officer to modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis
- Report annually to the Secretary on information forwarded from LEAs

Requirements of Act for LEAs:

- Comply with the state law
- Provide an assurance to the state of compliance with the law
- Provide the following information to the state annually:
  - name of school
  - number of students expelled
  - type of firearm
  - policy requiring referral to police or authorities of student bringing firearm on campus

The definition of firearm contains three elements, which include:

- Firearm (as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code)
  - Any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive
  - Any weapon which will, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter

- Firearm component or attachment
  - Any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device that expels a projectile, or any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled
  - The frame or receiver of any weapon designed to or be converted to expel a projectile
  - Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer

- Explosive, incendiary, or poison gas
  An explosive is any chemical compound or mixture that has the property of yielding readily to combustion or oxidation upon application of heat, flame, or shock, including but not limited to dynamite, nitroglycerin, trinitrotoluene, or ammonium nitrate when combined with other ingredients to form an explosive mixture, blasting caps, and detonators (F.S. 790.001 (5)). This category does not include Class-C common fireworks.
  - Any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas:
    - bomb,
    - grenade,
    - rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces,
    - missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce,
    - mine, or
    - similar device

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About the Southeast Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities

The Southeast Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities is one of five regional centers in a national network formed by the U.S. Department of Education through the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986. Established at the University of Louisville in 1990 with a focus on alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use prevention, the Center's scope expanded in 1994 to include violence prevention.

The Center's mission is to work creatively to foster healthy environments where all children have the opportunity to thrive. The Center offers training, consultation, and dissemination of information to enhance the systems in which children live (individual, family, school, community). Newsletters, research reviews, compilations of model programs, and grant alerts keep readers up-to-date on trends and strategies. The Center also maintains a resource center with hands-on assistance, referrals, and free materials. The Center's work falls under four main objectives:

- Facilitate school/community cooperation by building and supporting planning and action teams.
- Assist state educational agencies in coordinating and strengthening prevention efforts.
- Assist colleges and universities and local educational agencies in developing and implementing preservice and inservice training programs for educators.
- Evaluate and disseminate information on effective prevention programs and strategies.

The Center's training reflects a commitment to capacity building. All modules include a training of trainers component to ensure that qualified leaders are available to deliver the modules independently. Coordinated throughout the region by area field coordinators, the Center's trainings include Action Planning for Building Resilient Schools and Communities, Building Resilient Children, and Evaluation Planning/Implementation for Prevention Programs.

The Center maintains close collaborative relationships with schools, communities, and others throughout the Southeast. Area field coordinators facilitate solid communication throughout the region and tailor the Center's work to meet the specific needs of areas. With its network of school/community teams, the Center offers training and consultation services for special needs populations through the urban initiative. These efforts are underway in Atlanta, the District of Columbia, Louisville, Memphis, and Miami.

The Southeast Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities
Nancy J. Cunningham, Ph.D., Director
Spencerian Office Plaza
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
502-852-0052
800-621-7273
Fax: 502-852-1782

About the Florida Department of Education's Intervention and Prevention Services

Intervention and Prevention Services (IPS) is a collection of state programs in Florida's Department of Education that address the needs of students at risk. The programs—Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Comprehensive School Health, and Dropout Prevention—work together to integrate services for the benefit of students. IPS provides technical assistance and resources that positively impact student performance through the promotion of academics, health, and safety.

The Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program manages federal and state funds to prevent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and violence. Local school districts are given resources to implement prevention activities. Emphasis is placed on recognizing student risk factors and responding with effective efforts to build resilience to those risks.

The Dropout Prevention Program provides leadership and technical assistance to schools and districts for the Educational Alternative, Teenage Parent, Substance Abuse, Disciplinary, and Youth Services programs. Program staff also oversee the Full-Service Schools program.

The Comprehensive School Health Program works to establish local comprehensive school health efforts throughout the state. Local efforts are designed to prevent the health risk behaviors and health problems that cause the most illness and death in this country. Emphasis is placed on developing and implementing infrastructure to support comprehensive school health programs and on strengthening comprehensive school health and HIV prevention education.

The organizational structure of IPS provides an integrated approach to delivery of educational programs and services impacting the health risk factors and special needs of Florida's students.

Intervention and Prevention Services
Florida Department of Education
Suite 444
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
850-488-6315

About the SERVE Organization

SERVE is an educational organization whose mission is to promote and support the continual improvement of educational opportunities for all learners in the Southeast. To address this mission, SERVE engages in research and development in educational issues of critical importance to educators in the region and in the provision of research-based services to SEAs and LEAs that are striving for comprehensive school improvement. Committed to a shared vision of the future of education in the region, the organization is governed by a board of directors that includes the chief state school officers, governors, and legislative representatives from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina, and representatives of teachers and the private sector.

SERVE's core component is a Regional Educational Laboratory funded since 1990 by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education. SERVE has additional major funding from the Department in the areas of Migrant Education and School Leadership and is the lead agency in the Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Consortium for the Southeast and the Southeast and Islands Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SEIR◆TEC). Based on these grants and contracts, SERVE has developed a system of programs and initiatives that provides a spectrum of resources, services, and products for responding to local, regional, and national needs. These program areas are

- Program on Assessment, Accountability, and Standards
- Program for Children, Families, and Communities
- Program on Education Policy
- Program for the Improvement of Science and Mathematics Education
- Program on School Development and Reform
- Program on Technology in Learning

SERVE's National Specialty Area is Early Childhood Education, and the staff of SERVE's Program for Children, Families, and Communities is developing the expertise and the ability to provide leadership and support to the early childhood community nationwide for children birth to age eight.

In addition to the program areas, the SERVE Evaluation Department supports the evaluation activities of the major grants and contracts and provides evaluation services to SEAs and LEAs in the region. Through its Publishing and Quality Assurance Department, SERVE publishes a variety of studies, training materials, policy briefs, and other program products. These informative and low-cost publications include guides to available resources, summaries of current issues in education policy, and examples of exemplary educational programs. Through its programmatic, evaluation, and publishing activities, SERVE also provides contracted staff development and technical assistance in many areas of expertise to assist education agencies in achieving their school improvement goals.

SERVE's main office is at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, with major staff groups located in Tallahassee, Florida, and Atlanta, Georgia. Policy advisors are in each state department of education in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Current and detailed information on any of the program and service areas noted here may be found on SERVE's site on the World Wide Web at www.serve.org or by contacting our main office below.

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